Autonomy-Oriented Social Movements and the Politics of Affect

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Abstract

This dissertation explores damaging tendencies that exist within autonomy-oriented activism in the West. I examine how affect shapes the way that internal conflict is approached and internal strife is dealt with in radical communities. I adopt Sara Ahmed's proposition "that our emotions are bound up with the securing of the social hierarchy" (Ahmed, 2004b: 4) and given that autonomy-oriented practices are committed to dismantling existing hierarchies, it follows that the less oppressive social configurations sought by autonomous social movements must have different emotional underpinnings. My thesis involves applying critical theory on affect and emotion in social movements to interview data gathered from activists both currently and historically involved in autonomy-oriented social movement communities in Kingston, Ontario. I ask whether anglophone, western-based, autonomy-oriented social movements reproduced understandings of affect/emotions/feelings that underwrite the social order they are working against? I also ask, "how are our emotions conditioned by capitalism?". The research that I engage with provides responses to these questions by pointing out how the dominant discourse on emotions in the West encourages and informs certain modes of identity production that affect the diminishing and sad practices of autonomy-oriented communities and the (re)production of oppressive practices found in the dominant order. My work critically places this psychologizing view of emotions, and its damaging effects on resistance, within the context of neoliberal capitalism. I argue that the way we understand the politics of affect is an important dimension of radical struggle, and will inform and impact upon our individual and collective capacities to respond to, and refuse to reproduce relations of control and domination. I look for an understanding of "why"

and to “what extent” these determinations exists, and look for hope in a politics of affect which supports an autonomy-oriented ethic.

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Dr. Susanne Soederberg encouraged me to pursue grad school and several key people help to keep me enrolled. If it wasn't for L.M, M.W, J.D.B.W III, I wouldn't be writing these words. In fact, this dissertation is a product of countless encounters that have both augmented and diminished my capacity to act over the past decade. Recently, the most joyful encounters have been those generated through my collaboration with Scott Uzelman through many years of non-activist, radical endeavours, when we were running an underground public house together. Scott, Usman, and Christopher all helped me to understand how to better articulate the political orientation I already felt, to think more critically, and to think through critical theory more carefully. Bowling, beer, dancing and other altered states of consciousness also supported me in these endeavours.

There are a lot of people in Kingston and beyond, who wouldn't necessarily call themselves "activists" (at least not anymore), but who practice and experiment with their lives according to an autonomy-oriented ethic which I admire (B, K, L&J, Y, F, J…). My Puerto Rican network of friends are examples of autonomy-oriented theory in practice. These squatting, off-grid living, organic farming, and living lives-in-common friends are inspirational examples of people who live wild and creative lives, unapologetically rejecting a dominant society that is failing, and joyfully embracing and rebuilding lives of their own making. They exemplify the difficult work of alter-hegemony, done with open

hearts, and this is the life I am inclined towards. Many of these same people have also helped me look after my son- especially Za- her contribution to my life is immeasurable.

Indra is a wellspring of motivation for me. All of our encounters are opportunities to practice a politics of affect, and I been more focussed and more excited about this work since he was born. I am writing this while 8 months pregnant, and all of the challenges of being pregnant and single the second time around have been offset by the good fortune I have of being loved and supported by the people and networks I just mentioned.
I feel greatly inspirited through my cosmic love connection with Chanpreet Amole. In these final and most intense stages of writing, organizing, and child rearing, he has reminded me of the powerful role that love (and hormones) can have in enhancing and augmenting all the various and continuous processes of life. My heart is spilling over.

Finally, without the relentless pressure of my parents, David and Valerie, I probably would have quit this project. My mother came to Turtle Island from India at 20 something, and the way she presents her own identity has profoundly impacted my own sense of "self", and how I present and understand mine. *Guilt* as her tactic for motivation has often worked (although it does better at generating anxiety and depression). I am pretty sure she doesn't even know what I'm writing about, but I am completely sure that her joy quota will skyrocket now that her daughter has a PhD (that this degree will unlikely lead to any type of employment or related academic achievements is completely beside the point!). Our relationship is the most fascinating, challenging and full-of-potential relationship that I have ever known (at least *so far*), and since this piece of writing is about relationships, and how to enhance them, it is fitting that this accomplishment is dedicated to her.

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Chapter 1

Introduction:

The Role of Affect, Emotion, and Feeling in Resistance

The aim of my dissertation is to investigate the role of affect, and related concepts such as feeling and emotion, in the composition and decomposition[1] of autonomous social movement communities. My work critically examines the relationship between the ways that we understand affect, feeling, and emotion, and how these understandings articulate with the broader systems of oppression that autonomy-oriented activists are resisting. It investigates how the dominant discourse on emotions in the West[2] impacts the (de)composition of movement communities, and critically places this psychologizing view of emotions, and its damaging effects on resistance, within the context of neoliberal capitalism. In so doing, I advance theoretical and practical knowledge on how the assemblage of emotions, affects, and feelings can inform and impact upon our individual and collective capacities to act in struggle against relations of control and domination (Ahmed, 2004a, 2004b; Brennan, 2004; Cvetkovitch, 2003; 2012: Ngai, 2005; Probyn,

[1] Composition/decomposition/recomposition are autonomist Marxist terms that highlight the constant power and transformation of the working class in resistance to the power of capital. They are used to explain and highlight working class cycles of struggle, or as Negri puts it, "the perpetual 'remaking' of itself [the working class] again and again in a movement of constant transformation" (as cited in Dyer-Witherford, 1999: 66). These terms originally referred to class-based forms of identification, association, and organizational resistance to capital, however, they can be usefully applied to autonomous politics in general.

[2] There is no tidy definition of "the West", I refer to the West as the geographical areas that take much of their cultural heritage from Europe and European colonialism (or are located in Europe). However, "western culture", especially in Canada, tends to refer to the heavy influence of the political and cultural flows from the United States into Canada. I interviewed a collection of autonomy-oriented activists who had all organized in the small city of Kingston, Ontario. This city is both located geographically in "the West", and like most places in Canada the dominant culture is arguable "western".

2005). My work is strongly informed by a variety of radical approaches to understanding affect: anti-colonial, anti-capitalist, feminist, queer, and anti-racist. Feminists have extensively studied the role of affect and emotion in women's lives. In the 1980s, for instance, feminists wrote about the emotional lives and labours of women and the impact these labours have on broader social, cultural, and economic contexts (Probyn, 2005). But it is only within the last few decades that we have witnessed a surging interest in affect, what Woodward (1996), Berlant (1997), and Nicholson (1999) have referred to as an "affective turn." The recent trend to focus on affect is not specific to critical sociology, women's studies, or cultural studies, however. For example, Eng and Kazanjian's book *On Loss: The Politics of Mourning* (2003) is a collection of writings in critical history where warfare, disease, and political strife are written about in affective terms of "what remains" rather than "what is lost" in these kinds of traumatic historical moments. Similarly, Brian Massumi's *Politics of Affect* (2015), Rei Terada's *Feeling in Theory: Emotion After the Death of the Subject* (2001), and Anthony Elliott and Charles Lemert's *The New Individualism the Emotional Costs of Globalization* (2005) all illustrate the breadth of interest in affect and emotion in critical theory and critical history. These authors argue for the importance of considering affect/emotion/feeling in critical analysis across many fields of research, arguing that affect and its related concepts shape our understanding and interpretation of events, our sense of "self," and our relationship to different environments. In the words of Sara Ahmed, they "world make" (Ahmed, 2004b: 10).

Similarly, even writers in the field of neurology, such as Antonio Damasio (1994; 2003), have reconsidered the connection between emotion and rationality. Where

neurologists had previously understood emotion and rationality as separate domains, Damasio has led a shift towards understanding and considering how any dimension of "cognition" relates to sensory experience, which is the realm of affect (and emotion and feeling). His work is cited widely across the field of affect studies.

This preliminary discussion shows that the academic literature in this field is substantial. However, less attention has been paid to the role of affect, emotion, and feeling in social movements, a curious disparity given that resistance work is wrought with affects. There is even less work on the way affects, emotions, and feelings function in the (de)composition of specifically *autonomy-oriented* groups and communities. Despite the lack of attention to the role of affect in social movements, there is a small but growing body of work that is committed to an ongoing investigation of how oppression is at work in the "everyday". Works such as Brian Massumi's *Politics of Affect (2015),* Kathleen Stewart's *Ordinary Affects* (2007), Sara Ahmed's *The Cultural Politics of Emotions* (2004) and *The Promise of Happiness* (2010), Lauren Berlant's *Cruel Optimism* (2011), and Fred Moten and Stephano Harney's *The Undercommons*: *Fugivity Planning & Black Study* (2013) make important contributions to our understanding of affect and oppression in our daily lives. These works also investigate how our emotional /affectual experiences are conditioned by the logic(s) of capitalism[3]. By advancing an affective dimension of struggle, in the everyday, we can deepen the cognitive or conscious dimensions of subjectivity while asking why (and how) people resist against oppression, how it "feels" to be on the margins of the dominant order, and how we might

[3] I use the "logic(s)" of capitalism to refer to the ethics, principles, tenets, or/and the ontological commitments that inform the processes of capitalism. Included in these, for example, are 'efficiency', 'accumulation', 'competition', 'individuality/responsibility', 'inequality, 'expansion', 'crisis' (Harvey, 2007).

invent creative and liberating ways to resist capital's exploitative imperatives (Ahmed, 2004b; Berlant, 2011, 2012; Cvetkovitch, 2012; Massumi, 2015; Ngai; 2005; Stewart, 2007; Wetherell, 2012).

Although not always specifically related to autonomous practices, these works share an important assumption with those of us engaged in autonomy-oriented politics, namely that because oppression functions both on a "macro" scale (e.g., capitalism, the state, patriarchy) and on a "micro" scale in the smallest aspects of our daily lives,[4] our struggles against oppression must include examining and challenging the practices and processes of everyday life. Sara Ahmed goes further to argue "that our emotions are bound up with the securing of social hierarchy," and given that autonomy-oriented practices are committed to dismantling existing hierarchies, it follows that the less oppressive social configurations sought by autonomous social movements must have different emotional underpinnings (Ahmed, 2004b: 4). Working between critical affect studies and autonomy-oriented politics reveals that our "emotional" lives must be among the spaces where we practice radical resistance (Ahmed, 2004b; Berlant, 2011; Cvetkovitch, 2012; Ngai; 2005; Stewart, 2007; Wetherell, 2012; Wynter, 2015).

My investigation proceeds from this intersection by asking the following question: to what extent have western-based, autonomy-oriented social movements reproduced understandings of affect/emotions/feelings that underwrite the social order they are working against, and to what extent does this reproduction limit the ability of these movements to achieve a relative autonomy?,

[4] The distinction between "macro" and "micro" is not clear cut as the two scales are always present within one another. That is, systems of oppression are always constituted by processes that encompass large areas and span larger numbers of people as well as more "everyday" lived processes that happen on a "micro" scale (Massumi, 2015).

My engagement with affect theory is informed and enriched by results from interviews I conducted with people who have been, or are currently involved, in autonomy-oriented organizing.[5] My participants and I readily acknowledge that in our experiences people can treat each other very poorly on "the left," especially in radical communities such as the autonomy-oriented ones I am studying. I will argue that this reality is inconsistent with the ethics of autonomy, which are anti-capitalist, anti-oppressive, and usually encompass queer, anarchist, and autonomist Marxist ideas of responsibility and reciprocity, horizontal organizing, and direct action. Autonomy-oriented practices aim to consciously challenge the failings of previous ways of doing politics on the left, that is, the reproduction of internal power hierarchies and the inability to deal with difference within and outside of groups (Day, 2005; Pickerill et al., 2006; Srivastava, 2006; Uzelman, 2005). In theory, there is a commitment within these communities to create alternative relationships, compositions, and institutions to those that exist in the dominant order, by reinventing political processes and identity construction through non-hierarchical and consensus-based decision making (Gordon, 2007; Pickerill et al., 2006; Ruddick, 2010; Star 2006; Wilkinson, 2009).

Despite these commitments, many of the autonomy-oriented social movement communities that were described in the literature I reviewed have been unsuccessful in achieving autonomy in the area of emotions (which includes conflict-resolution methods). My own findings were consistent with much of the literature. For example, I found that there is a lot of strife in western-based radical organizing, and it was clear that this has

[5] There is no such thing as complete "autonomy." There is always a relationship between the self and the collective, and therefore the dominant order is present in all attempts to achieve autonomy from it. In this project, when I use the term "autonomous" it is with the acknowledgement that no complete autonomy is achievable. For this reason, I try to employ "autonomy-oriented" when possible.

had oppressive and damaging effects within and outside of communities on the left. The existing mechanisms for dealing with conflict are strategies such as "calling out," and emotional experiences are dealt with at the superficial level of "check-ins," "debriefs," or "let's talk" models, none of which are useful to deconstruct patterns of oppression that may be present and related to the experience itself and in turn, the potential relation of the experience to existing systems of oppression and control. One of my most interesting findings was that my participants usually had only experienced (in formal organizing contexts) a management focus on "negative" emotions. When asked about joyful experiences during organizing, nearly all my interviewees relayed stories of joyful times, but they were not ever tied to processes that had been *intended* to cultivate joy or "positive" emotions through organizing. The joyful and healing aspects of my participants' experiences were predominantly found at the "individual" level as people disconnected from activism (to party, dance, create art. etc)[6].

Why is there a customary culture of strife that is reflected through infighting and associated with practices such as excommunicating, shaming, and other forms of punishment? Several prominent theorists of affect would suggest that these punitive and damaging practices occur because the most intimate ways that we identify and articulate experience, the way we are in-formed[7] (a term Brian Massumi uses to articulate the way that we become subjects of value under capitalism encounters and the way that power is

[6] Many of my participants talked about the feeling when they *first* became radicalized as exhilarating, due to a sense of newfound connection between themselves and others who felt the same way towards the world. Likewise, there were moments of exhilaration and joy during certain protest contexts, of feeling a unifying force amongst people who are generally fighting for the same things. However, these were not the "everyday" experiences of activism, and even in these contexts, the highs were often followed by lows.

[7] This is a term Brian Massumi uses to articulate the way that, affectively, we become subjects of value under capitalism, something I expand upon in chapter 3.

productive, which I expand upon in chapter 3) emotionally, are processes and formations permeated by the logic of capitalism (Ahmed, 2004b; Berlant, 2011; Cvetkovitch, 2012; Massumi, 2015; Ngai; 2005; Stewart, 2007). These affectual tendencies incline towards the logic of capitalism and are played out in the models we use to deal with and express emotion. They limit our capacities to act/feel in ways that might generate outcomes that are more in line with an autonomy-oriented ethic, and which are more useful for resistance (Ahmed, 2004b; Cvetkovitch, 2012).

As my work suggests, in the western world, we tend to experience emotions in particular ways under particular conditions; we hold on to emotions as "deeply personal"; emotions give the "quality" of our personal historical experiences (Ahmed, 2004b). The dominant paradigm of emotions in the West is a biologically informed conceptualization that underwrites much of the self-help industry and its associated positive therapeutic models by reifying emotions and suggesting that emotions are usually either positive or negative, universal, nameable, and treatable (Ekman, 1992). This "common sense" approach to addressing and processing emotions is evident in radical activism and can be seen in models such as "let's talk," "check-ins," and "debriefs,"[8] all which require the labelling and presenting of emotions into what Sara Ahmed would refer to as "individual property", expressed in personal narratives, with the expected "therapeutic" dimension often being the act of "disclosure" itself (Ahmed, 2004a; Srivastava, 2006). More

[8] There were other, less common, examples given by a couple of my participants. One was an example of a remediation process that emerged due to emotional abuse reported by a female participant from her male partner, both of whom worked within the same activist community. This resulted in an attempt to punish and at the same time rehabilitate the abuser. The complexity and intensity of this situation for the whole community resulted in, according to many participants, divisions emerging between members and the factioning of the community. Eventually the process was dissolved without reaching the forecasted "end" of the remediation. Another example is a "trial" model attempted by autonomous activists in the case of a rape being reported between members. This trial is ongoing and has also had extremely complex results.

importantly, these models, and the emotions at work in them, are rarely examined as a possible site of resistance in their own right. They tend to push complex affective experiences into formulaic, labelled, gendered, and oppressive clichés and tropes (e.g., the sad militant, angry person of colour, crying white woman, killjoy feminist, happy homemaker, impure anarchist, ignorant/dominating/racist white male) which calcify identity categories and structure expression around a "self" vs. "other" blame-based framework (Ahmed, 2004a, 2004b; Cvetkovitch, 2012; Srivastava, 2006).

Reaching beyond a capitalist and liberal approach to conflict resolution and dealing with emotions of strife requires exploration of new affective practices/politics that are *actually* built on an autonomous ethos. I argue that there is a different way we can "deal" with emotions, starting with the consideration that affective practices affect us all, and if practices are emotional and blame based, mostly punitive and cruel, then they will work against broader anti-capitalist objectives. But how can we move past the rigidifications of an identity-based approach to emotions and conflict, while still acknowledging that certain bodies bear the brunt of systemic oppression?

To assist in this exploration, I suggest we engage in what Massumi calls a politics of affect, or an ethico-aesthetic politics (Massumi, 2015), in order to "expand the range of affective potential" and "resist personification in peak individuals" (Massumi, 2015:36). I understand this as looking to creatively theorize/find what Massumi calls the "margins of manoeuvrability," which means looking for the subtle and hidden (or not so subtle) spaces where hope can be found in the present away from global capitalism's affects which, inter alia, are the grooves of tired and formulaic scripts and clichés[9], in order to

[9] The haunting figure of the sad militant is a perfect example.

enhance our capacity to resist the oppression of the dominant order and to remain hopeful in the day-to-day vis-à-vis our relations with other bodies[10] (Massumi, 2002: 212).

My research will contribute to an emergent literature on the affective dimensions of grassroots political struggle and to the theoretical understanding of affect. I hope this work will act as a useful reference in understanding how relationships of domination are reproduced -- and potentially undermined -- by presenting the case that creatively refusing to abide by the West's dominant ontology of emotions can enhance our subjective and collective capacities to act/feel and continue to resist relations of control and domination.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 is an exploration of the meanings and interrelationships of three key concepts for this dissertation: emotion, affect, and feeling. For each of these concepts, I draw from the most cited authors in the relevant fields, and review the dominant discourses as well as more marginal work that informs my own. In the section on affect, I pay special attention to the foundational work of Spinoza, which has influenced nearly all subsequent theorists of affect such as Deleuze and Guattari (1987; 2001), Massumi (2002; 2015), as well as much of the feminist (and psychoanalytic) work on affect and emotion (Cvetkovitch, 2003; Gorton, 2007; Ngai, 2005; Probyn, 2005; Sedgwick, 2003).

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[10] A part of this strategy (margins of manoeuvrability) is adopting a perspective that "events" (for example conflict situations) emerge from a complex web of processes that are shaped by the discourses of capital. In order to resist capital's determinations in shaping for example, how conflict situations "play out", a level of engagement and understanding at a "level" other than "the personal" would be sought. I discuss this more in the conclusion (Massumi, 2015).

In Chapter 2 I outline the dominant tendencies in social movement studies with respect to the role of emotions in mainstream social movements. I look to where and how emotions have been used to analyze and explore both the causes and the effects of western social movements. I examine the relationships between the dominant ontology of emotions and how this has impacted the epistemological commitments of the western mainstream theory on social movements.

In Chapter 3 I focus on the concept "autonomous" and how this concept is articulated in different discourses, before moving to a review of how the concepts of affect and emotion have been deployed in specifically autonomy-oriented literature. I contextualize the object "autonomous politics" in order to clearly define how I use the term, and the variations on it in anarchism, indigenous thought, and autonomist Marxism (all of which have multiple and varying conceptualizations). I conclude with a review of the subset of literature that deals with emotions and affect in the context of specifically western autonomy-oriented social movements.

In chapter 4 I begin by addressing some important methodological considerations before delving into the results of my interviews. This is primarily a theoretical-philosophical thesis, concerned with the role that emotions and affect have in autonomy-oriented organizing. But because I have worked and lived in autonomy-oriented communities, on and off, for nearly 20 years, it was important to me to conduct interviews in order juxtapose critical theory on affect with movement practices. To do this, I take a qualitative approach that involves applying critical theory on affect and emotion in social movements to interview data gathered from activists both currently and historically involved in autonomy-oriented social movement communities in Kingston,

Ontario. Initial groundwork for this project began in December of 2010 while investigating the "sustainability" of social movements in Chiapas, Mexico with Dr. Richard Day. My investigative approach and many of my research questions were inspired by this work. I held 15 in-depth interviews with activists who have worked in many different contexts but who primarily organize and work in autonomy-oriented resistance in Kingston. My work also has an ethnographic dimension. I say dimension because throughout my years in Kingston, Ontario I have been involved "on and off", with autonomy-oriented organizing. My activist involvement in Kingston has actually been much less that in previous years of my life. During my late teens and throughout my twenties I was much more heavily involved in both squatting movements and other radical resistance efforts through participation in different groups in and around different anti-capitalist objectives, such as: anti-poverty, feminist collectives, queer film collectives, reclaim the streets parties (while living in London, England), anti-NAFTA and FTAA work, indigenous solidarity movements, POC (People of Colour) and anti-racist education initiatives, and the list goes on. When I arrived in Kingston, I tried to connect with what was going on in the city and I felt like my disillusionment with "activism" had reached a point where I had either no energy, was too old, or had just become too sensitive to the issues that I bring up in this dissertation. I have experienced first hand the abusive treatment of people by the radical left community. For this and other personal reasons, it felt like the grim side of organizing was too palpable for me to be involved in the way I used to be. Thus, the "ethnographic dimension" of this thesis arises because it is crucial for me to approach this material theoretically (through reading texts), empirically (through conducting interviews), and ethnographically, as a person

who has lived my life resisting the dominant order in various ways. For these reasons, this thesis takes an eclectic or hybridized methodological approach. It is predominantly theoretical and philosophical with a qualitative dimension that, due to my personal experience, has an inevitable ethnographic component.

In the methods section I explain how/why I chose the snowball sampling method and the way that I minimized my participants' risks and collected the data from interviews. I then present and reflect on the conversations with my participants on what is currently happening in autonomy-oriented communities that they have engaged with, pointing out the problems, difficulties and disheartening reverberations that come from the current approach to emotions in western autonomy-oriented organizing. A complete list of my interview questions can be found in Appendix A of the dissertation. One of the unfortunate realities of working with sensitive material is that many of the most insightful quotes, details of stories, and contexts cannot be presented due to concerns around confidentiality. The radical left in Kingston is small, which meant that discussions of painful conflicts and their contexts had to be removed in order to avoid revealing the identity of the interviewees. In fact, the bulk of my interview material was unable to be used due to these considerations. This is one of the crucial limits to being a researcher and activist who is interested in stories that have a high emotional content; there will always be a gap between what I hear and what I present, and also biases from both the participants and me affecting how we hear, interpret and analyze the stories/memories. I delve into this more deeply in Chapter 5.

I conclude the dissertation with a conversation about where we might look for hope, which, amongst other strategies, involves a (re)drawing of the supposed boundaries

between self and collective that are deeply imbricated in the West's dominant ontology of emotions. I suggest creative ways to maintain hope in the face of conflict, depression, and depletion, through an autonomy-inspired ethos and a suggestion to turn towards a politics of affect. Rather than prescribe solutions, I draw some common and creative suggestions from a range of theorists such as Fred Moten and Stefano Harney (2013), Brian Massumi (2015), and Slyvia Wynter (2015). These authors offer theoretical inspiration on how we can challenge the deterministic, reductionist, and/or essentialist understandings of emotion and the dead ends of identity politics. The concluding chapter is a joyful consideration into how we might creatively expand our capacities and spaces of hope/resistance/autonomy through an ongoing and emerging ethico-aesthetic politics, where, in the words of Slyvia Wynter, "the rule is love" (Wynter, 2015: x).

Chapter 2:

Exploring the Theoretical Concepts: Emotion, Affect, and Feeling

This chapter surveys the field of affect studies for the dominant and diverging definitions of emotion/affect/feeling in order to clearly distinguish between these concepts before moving to the next chapter, where I examine the application of these as found in existing literature on social movements. Contemporary research on affect and emotions tends to position itself on one side or the other of an ongoing debate between "affect" and "emotion" (which is more important? which does what?), a debate which reifies a biological and socio-political split, with the category of "feeling" floating somewhere in between. Regardless of the variations in their definitions, emotions, feelings, and affects are terms that are generally contrasted to thought, reason, or intellect, however recognized across disciplines as different "registers" of knowing, apprehending and experiencing life (Ahmed, 2000, 2000a, 2004b, 2010; Brennan, 2004; Cvetkovitch, 2012; Ngai, 2005; Probyn, 2005; Ratcliff, 2008; Stewart: 2007).

Much of the contemporary research in the field of affect studies is informed by an existing genealogy. Psychoanalysis has offered up a way of describing "subjectivity" and a vocabulary used to describe desire, the emotional life, and subsequent attachments of the subject (Berlant, 2011, 2012). Then, the philosophy of Baruch Spinoza was used by theorists like Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari to expand the vocabulary of psychoanalysis and specifically pursue an investigation into the question, "what is affect?" The way that Spinoza in particular articulated the answer to this question is by using an understanding of affect as "capacity to affect and be affected," and this

definition has impacted nearly all subsequent literature in the field. Influenced greatly by Spinoza's notion of affect as "capacity", Deleuze and Guattari expanded this vocabulary thinking of affect as a "force" or "intensity," and emphasized its quality of "contingency" (Massumi, 2002).

Often taken for granted in the current work on affect is a conceptualization of the subject as decentered, so I begin this chapter by briefly explaining the importance of the decentered subject for work in the field of affect. Following this I explore each category (emotion, affect, feeling) in turn. Starting with the dictionary definition, I survey the lines of symmetry and difference between notable scholars in the field for each category[11]. I begin with the category of emotions, proceed to the category of affect, and then end with an exploration of "feeling." This decision was made because many authors contrast emotions and affect to each other, so it made sense for one to follow the other. For the category of affect I focus on the philosophy of Baruch Spinoza and Deleuze and Guattari since, as mentioned, they all influence, in one way or another, the work of nearly all of the scholars in the field of emotion/feeling/affect. I end with the category of "feeling" since it is surprisingly unique in many ways and it is connected, yet distinguishable, from the definitions of affect and emotion.

I conclude the chapter by taking the position that affect, emotion, and feeling are overlapping but quite distinct "registers" of experience, each of which lead to and reflect

[11] In the introduction to *Affect and Emotion* (2012), social psychologist Margaret Wetherell launches her investigation of affect and emotion by examining the Collins English Dictionary to understand the different everyday connotations that the word affect has (Wetherell, 2012). After reading these connotations I decided to compare them to those found for "emotion" and "feeling" in the same dictionary. Not surprisingly, the connotations from each definition coincided with the employment of these terms found in the field of research for each category. It was instructive to read these contemporary definitions and to use them as a springboard into how scholars in the field of affect are distinguishing between these categories of "knowing." So, I begin each category with the *Collins' English Dictionary* (2003) definition then begin to survey the literature for how each term is used.

different epistemological commitments. Together they are an assemblage of discourses that inform an affectual understanding of "self" (the ontology of the subject). However, the category of "emotions" in the West is encumbered by its relationship to popularized therapeutic models, with powerful and determined blueprints for how to understand and treat emotions and understand "self". The dominant way of apprehending and discussing emotions in the West is greatly influenced by positive psychology and the self-help market both of which are grounded in an ontology of the subject that takes for granted a centered, contained, and essential "self". This centered ontology has shaped and been shaped by histories of colonialism and capitalism and these histories are tethered to the "modern" discourses I examine. They structure the way we understand, express, and treat emotions by discursively shaping our understanding of what it means to be emotionally healthy in western cultures (Ahmed, 2004a, 2004b; Brennan, 2004; Cvetkovitch, 2012; Ngai, 2005; Probyn, 2005; Stewart: 2007; Srivastava, 2006). By contrast, the term "affect" tends to be confined to specialist discourses because definitions are abstract and are difficult to articulate and apply practically for understanding everyday sensory experience. I conclude this chapter by suggesting that to resist the ongoing disciplinary affects of emotions as epistemic to a centered sense of "self" in the West, a reconsideration of the relationship between self vs. other or self vs. collective from an affective standpoint appears needed for autonomy-oriented politics. To aid in this determination I suggest a shift to the more abstract realm of affect and consider what a commitment to a decentered ontology of the subject might "look like" in radial politics/organizing.

The Decentered Subject

Much of the scholarship on affect takes for granted the existence of the decentered subject, usually signalling a debt in this thinking to psychoanalytic and poststructural thought (Ahmed, 2004b; Anderson, 2006; Berlant, 2011; Cvetkovitch, 2012; Thrift, 2004a; 2004b, 2008). "Transpersonal" or "decentred" models of subjectivity posited in psychoanalysis and poststructuralist approaches have radically challenged modernist discourses on subjectivity. "Deconstruction of the subject" stands in contrast to and rejects the dominant modernist, Cartesian subject in the academy and beyond. The "centered" subject assumes an innately given individual subject that is the "original" site of both cognitive representation and social action (Latour, 1999). The "centered" or "essential" subject was a part of Cartesian dualism in which the mind and its thinking essence were seen as functioning independently of the body and the material world (Latour, 1999). Dominant discourses on emotion tend to be grounded within the behavioural sciences where emotions are studied as though they arise and remain contained within a "subject." In this view, emotion is signalled by internal physiological changes, manifested by nonverbal reactions, and defined in most cases by cognitive interpretations (Ekman, 1957, 1972, 1992). This understanding is hegemonic within positive psychology and informs the common sense of most people's understanding of the self. I will return to this discussion in my critique of positive psychology below. For now, the point is that the dominant discourse on emotions has wider cultural consequences that play into the most intimate yet popularized understanding of "self." This influence extends into the study of social movements with the result being that emotions are often analyzed in a deterministic way.

In contrast, the decentered subject is composed of multiple, socially constructed, and context-dependent identities (Deleuze & Guattari 1987; Foucault, 1990; Freud; 1995; Lacan 1966; Latour, 1999; Spinoza, 2000). Michel Foucault is well-known for weakening the notion that there is an innate or "essential" nature to a subject that is pre-social. Writing on the nature of sexuality, Foucault implies this decentred understanding of the subject:

> "Sexuality must not be thought of as a kind of natural given which power tries to hold in check, or as an obscure domain which knowledge tries gradually to uncover. It is the name that can be given to a historical construct: not a furtive reality that is difficult to grasp, but a great surface network in which the stimulation of bodies, the intensification of pleasures, the incitement to discourse, the formation of special knowledge, the strengthening of controls and resistances, are linked to one another, in accordance with a few major strategies of knowledge and power" (Foucault, 1990: 106).

Foucault here helps to illustrate that is not plausible to conceptualise agency in terms of social subjects that are understood as either mutually independent or entirely contained within, for instance, institutions, organizations, or social movements. Rather, the subject positions are interplaying within a multiplicity of narratives, none of which are essential or "fixed" (Foucault, 1990). In the work on social movements, the ontology of a decentered subject means that political subjectivities are viewed as discursively constituted rather than, for example, merely revealed as "false consciousness" yielding to the truth of who oppressed subjects "really are" (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001).

In the field of affect studies, the decentred subject informs a decentred understanding of affect. Many thinkers contributed to the deconstruction of the mind–body dualism but most importantly for the purposes of this dissertation, are those authors who also deconstructed the body/bio-centric notion of affects/emotions/feelings. For example, Freud and Lacan in their work on psychoanalysis, dislodge affects/emotions/feelings from "insideness" or a "withness" arguing that the surface of the body does not "bound" subjectivity "within" (Ahmed, 2004b; Berlant, 2011; Freud, 1964; Lacan, 1988). Contemporary Spinozan Ben Anderson is representative of the continuation of this trend when he argues "to think through affect we must untie it from a subject or object and instead attune to how affects inhabit the passage between contexts through various processes of translocal movement" (Anderson, 2006: 736). Thus, for Anderson and many others working in the field of affect studies, the theoretical conceptualizing of affects (including emotions and feelings) takes the "subject" and the "body" as not static or fixed, but discursively constituted (Ahmed, 2004b; Berlant, 2011; Cvetkovitch, 2012; Massumi, 2002, 2015; Wetherell, 2012). So, the decentered subject means that emotions experienced by the subject are not "emerging" or contained and possessed by a falsely conceived "individuality," but rather they are compositions within a "great surface network" of controls and resistances (Foucault, 1990).

Psychoanalytic terms are similar. Sianne Ngai in her book *Ugly Feelings* (2005) articulates the relationship between "the subject" to affect and emotion in psychoanalysis when she argues

> **"**at the end of the day, the difference between emotion and affect is still intended to solve the same basic and fundamentally descriptive problem it was

> coined in psychoanalytic practice to solve: that of distinguishing first-person from third-person feeling, and, by extension, feeling that is contained by an identity from feeling that is not" (2005: 27).

What Ngai means is that the very idea of "first" versus "third" person in psychoanalytic theory is a slippery idea—it is slippery because the "subject" is divided; to contend with her unfulfilled and ceaseless desiring, she attaches, represses, displaces, projects, and misconstrues feelings and emotions, and thus her feelings are not contained or "hers" as they are always a part of relation with other bodies (past, present, future) (Ahmed, 2004b; Ngai, 2005). This relates to Anderson's depiction of affect as not residing, or fixed, to a particular subject or situation. Ngai is one of many authors who use psychoanalytic tools to analyze our emotional lives and our desire and attachment to "things" (human and non), at the same time calling attention to how the work of repression is constantly in motion (Ahmed, 2000; 2004a, 2004b; Berlant, 2012).

Applying the ontology of a decentered subjectivity means that affects, emotions, and feelings *should* be seen as both personal and social, without the personal being reducible to the social, nor the social being reducible to the personal (Ahmed, 2004b; Massumi, 2015)**.** Author's with this commitment would not be epistemologically bound by the problem of "first" or "third" person feeling and reject the notion that there is simply a "within" versus a "without" to feeling. They reject that the surface of the body "bounds" subjectivity "within", which becomes central to understanding the (de)composition between self and others. While surveying the literature to find the answer to the questions "what is affect?" and "what is emotion?" I found that the

different definitions given were directly tied to the given author's understanding of the ontology of the subject, which in turn informed their epistemological commitments.

Generally, in the field of affect studies, those who reject Cartesian dualism also reject that there can be the possibility of a "closed circuit" to feeling and these works stand in contrast to the positivist and deterministic conceptualizations of emotions. I explore the work of Slyvia Wynter later on, but briefly, according to Wynter, the "subject" that understands, relates, and builds an autobiographical sense of "self" *emotionally*, will continue to be productive of a liberal (now neoliberal) and capital epistemology of "self", a circuit that continues to produce emotionally regulated subjects that rely on a centered subject ontology productive of the disciplining of bodies, a requirement for ongoing European colonial projects (Wynter, 2015). Emotional life has been a site where efforts to create "subjects" to be productive of colonial efforts have succeeded, limiting possibilities of being and feeling in service of capital (Wynter, 2015). With regard to western social movements communities my main questions stem from an interest in the effects of capitalism's affects on emotions in resistance work. Specifically, how does capitalism affect the existing models we use to express emotions in autonomy-oriented groups? And have autonomy-oriented activists achieved autonomy in the area of emotions? If not, what are the consequences? In the subsequent sections, I define emotion, affect, and feeling in order to disentangle definitions and engage with these types of questions more clearly.

Emotion

> Emotion (noun) – strong feeling; excitement; a state of consciousness having to do with the arousal of feelings, distinguished from other mental states, as cognition, volition, and awareness of physical sensation. Any specific feeling; any of various complex reactions with both mental and physical manifestations, as love, hate, fear, anger, etc. Word origin: c16 from French, from old French esmovoir "to excite", from Latin emovere to disturb, from movere to move. (Collins, 2003, sixth edition)

The above dictionary citation encapsulates the dominant perspective on emotion. It emphasizes "specific" and "personal" "states of consciousness" that have to do with the "arousal of feelings." In fact, the debates within the field of affect studies are precisely around the following question: are emotions personally and biologically contained? This question generates more questions: are emotions "personal", that is, contained within "the person"? Is a "person" bound by the "physical body," the boundary of which is the "skin?" All of these questions harken back to the ontology of the centered versus decentered self. Many authors make a clear distinction between affect and emotion, viewing emotion as referring to a sociological, autobiographical expression of feeling whereas affect is more firmly rooted in the subtle ways in which we interact, respond to, and receive sensations/stimuli that are not necessarily "bound" by the physical body (Calhoun, 2001; Jasper, 1998; Probyn, 2005).

The dominant understanding of emotion comes from the biological sciences, and many authors working in critical social sciences refer to it as a "psychologized" approach

to emotions (I describe this in detail further on) (Ahmed, 2004b, 2010; Cvetkovitch, 2003, 2012). Like the dictionary definition above, the dominant approach suggests emotions are states of consciousness generated by aroused feelings that are distinguishable from other mental states. Further, this approach suggests that emotions have several dimensions: they are signalled by internal physiological changes, manifested by nonverbal reactions, and defined in most cases by cognitive interpretations (Ekman, 1957, 1972, 1992; Plutchik, 1980, 2002, Tomkins, 1962).

In this view, "strong emotions" are "physiological changes" that occur. For example, research in this area shows that the physical components of fear include increased heartbeat, blood pressure, adrenaline secretions, and blood sugar level, alongside slowing of digestion, and dilation of the pupils (Ekman, 1993). Only some of these changes are recognizable to the person having them. Most of the sensations are "proprioceptive stimuli" defined as the "continuous but unconscious sensory flow from the movable parts of our body (muscles, tendons, joints) by which their position and tone and motion are continually monitored and adjusted, but in a way which is hidden from us because it is autonomic and unconscious" (Sacks as cited in Massumi, 2002: 43). In other words, proprioception is sensation activated by the movement of internal tissues. Proprioception comes up frequently in the work on affect, emotion, and feeling, and appears to offer clues as to how affectual "messages" are signalled, received, and processed (Brennan, 2004). An example given by psychologist Paul Ekman, a leading researcher in emotions and their relations to facial expressions, is how a churning stomach or tense jaw can signal "something is wrong." In fact, there is an endless proprioceptive "feed" going on that is nearly completely cognitively undetectable

(Ekman et al.,1983; Massumi, 2002). Not all physical changes accompanying emotions are internal. They also relate to observable changes. Some of these changes involve a person's appearance (e.g. blushing or sweating) while others involve behaviours (e.g. a distinct facial expression, posture, gestures, different vocal tone, and rate). Ekman includes both sets of changes in descriptors of the non-verbal expression of emotion (Ekman, 1972, 1992; Ekman et al., 1983).

During the 1960s, the psychologized approach to emotions argued that *all* emotions were nameable, predictable, universal, and limited in their range. The typical list of emotional "states" included anger, fear, happiness, sadness, shame, guilt, regret, and usually also included moods like miserable, elated, bored, or just "good" or "bad" moods (Ekman, 1957; Cvetkovitch, 2003). This standardized list of emotions was established by observing and measuring perturbations on the physical body that often result from external stimuli. Efforts were then made in quantifying these perturbations according to their corresponding range of states/responses (emotional states) and then naming or labelling them (Ekman 1957, 1992; Ekman et al., 1979). The result of this measuring, categorizing, and correlating of perturbations on the body with associated mental states gives the short list of emotions that are said to be "universal" to almost all humans[12] (Ekman, 1972).

Due to criticism regarding the validity of universalizing emotions and reading non-verbal communication in an "objective" manner, there have recently been updates in

[12] Silvan Tomkins was the mentor of Ekman, and greatly influenced Ekman's work. Tomkins argued that there were only nine affects (akin to drives or animal emotion). These affects are biologically based, and described in their mild and more intense manifestations. They basic seven are: 'fear-terror', 'anger-rage', 'distress-anguish', 'surprise-startle', 'enjoyment-joy', 'interest-excitement' and 'shame-humiliation'. He later described 'disgust' and 'dissmell' as two other universal and basic affects (Tomkins, 1962, 1963, 1991)

this field of research (Ahmed, 2004b). The first set of updates involve a reconsideration of the link between physical and emotional states and the mind. The mind, in the updated perspective, plays an important role in determining how we feel. Interestingly, researchers have found that the physical state of "fear" (the racing heart, perspiration, tense muscles, elevated blood pressure) is nearly *identical* in observable symptoms to the physical changes of excitement, joy, and several other emotions (Shimanoff, 1982). Thus, if we were to measure the physical condition of someone having "strong emotions" without any verbal/interpretive information, we would have a hard time knowing whether that person was trembling with fear or excitement (Shimanoff, 1982). Most emotions have great similarities physiologically but actual differences concern the applications of labels and processes of interpretation, or the cultural context that influences how we understand the same physical symptoms at a given time. Slumped posture provides a perfect example of the cultural and context-dependent nature of the physiological display of emotion. It can be a sign of sadness and defeat or it may signal fatigue, a hangover, or a spinal condition. Likewise, trembling hands might indicate excitement, fear, frustration, or the shakes from alcohol poisoning. In short, non-verbal behaviour is usually ambiguous, and it's dangerous to assume that it can be read objectively. So, although there is a major non-verbal element to emotions, research in the behaviour sciences is now suggesting that measured physiological differences often aren't much help in distinguishing emotions (Shimanoff, 1982).

Related, contemporary research in this field argues that although it is "normal" to think of nonverbal behaviours as the reaction or symptom of an "emotional state" (as though one leads to the other) the opposite may also be true; non-verbal behaviour can

cause emotions. Ekman uncovered instances when experimental subjects were able to create physiological changes by altering their facial expressions in ways that appeared angry, disgusted, amused, sad, surprised, and contemptuous. Subjects' bodies physiologically responded as if they were having these feelings (Ekman, 1993).

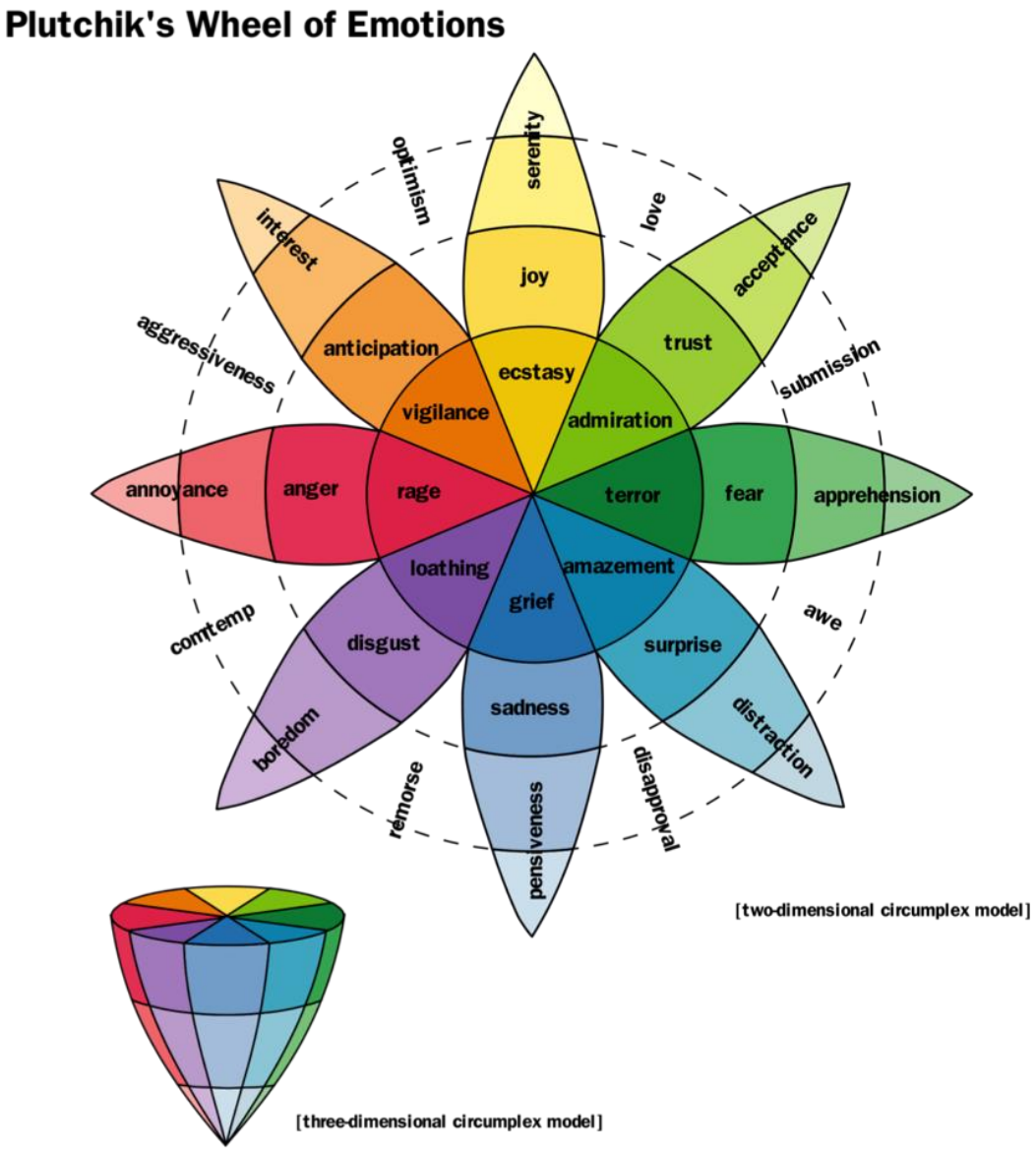
A second set of updates in this field is related to the "universal emotions." The research in this field maintains that there are basic emotions (fear, anger, surprise, disgust, etc.) experienced by people around the world. No matter where or when a person is born, and regardless of his or her or their background, the ability to feel happiness, sadness, surprise, anger, disgust, and fear is universal (Ekman, 1994). At the same time, this literature does acknowledge that despite the similarities in physical and mental experience, emotional experience is not uniform across cultures and contexts. For example, Ekman and his colleagues presented findings of the emotions expressed by people of different cultures in the same context. For instance, this research suggests that fear of strangers and risky situations are more likely to frighten Americans and Europeans than those in Japan. Japanese people, however, are more apprehensive about relational communication than Americans and Europeans (Ekman et al., 1994). Conclusions about gender differences in emotions are also drawn across the literature (Snodgrass, 1985, 1992). There is, for instance, a popularized notion that men are less expressive than women and that these differences exist "naturally", a commonplace sentiment I examine in more detail below.

Despite cultural and gender variations, the "universality" of emotions is never brought into question in this literature. The "ability" and "expectation" to feel what is carefully defined as happiness, sadness, surprise, anger, disgust, and fear is still

understood within this field of research to be universal. This is curious given the research that suggests that many of these emotions generate similar perturbations on the body. This further points to the importance of labelling, the mind, and the cultural construction of given emotions in given contexts (Ekman, 1992, 1994). The universality of emotions is one of the benchmark "typologies" of emotion in this field that informs the way that emotions are talked about across disciplines (Ahmed, 2004b).

Popularized Theories of Emotion

The assumptions informing the psychologized approach to emotions are also found in popularized theories of emotion. Given the mass appeal and influence of these theories, it is worth reviewing a few key authors. One influential method of conceptualizing emotions is Plutchik's "Emotion wheel" (1980). Plutchik was motivated to name and categorize emotions, arguing that complex and mixed emotions are usually what people feel but cannot express. His research found that people would usually only communicate one emotion, the "negative" one, in interpersonal communication (Plutchik, 1980). He argues that although there are "primary" emotions, often we are feeling complex combinations of two or more emotions; some are intense and others are relatively mild (Plutchik, 1980). Based on the foundational work of Ekman and the typology of universal emotions, his wheel is the quintessential example of attempts to contrast and categorize emotions.



Plutchik starts with the eight primary emotions located in the middle of the wheel. These primary emotions can combine to form other, mixed emotions of different intensities but along the same lines landing on the outer or inner parts of the wheel. Another feature of the wheel is that it suggests that emotions are like colors; some are simple and others are blends, and the intensity of the emotion correlates to the increasing

saturation of colour, that is, each vertical slice represents the range of a primary emotion from its mildest to its most intense state. The color wheel is interactive and meant to be used to locate, identify, and express your emotions. I can ask when using the wheel, what is the strength of the emotion? Or, what are the accompanying emotions? This model is found in introductory psychology classes, a range of self-help books, anger management therapy, interpersonal communication workshops, corporate team-building seminars, human resources development, and twelve-step programmes (Ahmed, 2004b, 2010; Plutchik, 1980).

Plutchik makes key assumptions in this wheel with regard to the nature of emotion, specifically that these are emotions that are clearly defined and articulated, they are "owned" and able to be discerned. These assumptions reflect the psychologized approach that emotions are limited and universal and can be articulated as such. They abide by the notion of a centered subject who experiences emotions contained within their "person" and their "body".

Yet another popularized "emotional" model was developed by the psychologist Robert Rosenthal and his colleagues (1979). They developed the Profile of Non Verbal Sensitivity (PONS) test to measure the ability to recognize emotions that are expressed in facial expressions, bodily movements, and in vocal cues. The results of the test are said to gauge your emotional sensitivity. Women consistently score slightly higher than men. What the test ended up "confirming" are existing gender stereotypes; as a group, women are more likely than men to express feelings of vulnerability, including fear, sadness, loneliness, and embarrassment (Rosenthal et. al., 1979). Basically, the tropes "over-demonstrative woman" and "inexpressive man" were continuously confirmed through

Rosenthal's findings (Rosenthal et al., 1979). The study also showed that men rarely expressed sentiments of vulnerability, especially to their male friends, although they were more likely to express these "non-masculine" emotions in the presence of women. Men were less bashful about revealing their strength and positive emotions, and were more likely to use aggressive means to express anger, fear, or hurt pride. Differences between the sexes also exist in the marker "sensitivity to other's emotions" (Rosenthal et al., 1979). In couples, the women tended to be able to read the non-verbal cues of the man more than vice versa (Rosenthal et al., 1979).

Taken at face value, the conclusion Rosenthal offers is that the ability to "feel" something non-verbally or to be able to pick it up is an essential quality pertaining to women, and of course we can look to our own lives to see how gendered our responses are to things. Even if we have a reaction that violates the gendered expectation, the reaction to that reaction will usually be gendered (Ahmed, 2004b, 2010). In the next chapter on emotions in social movements, one example of this is the struggle for women to be seen and recognized in resistance efforts as legitimately "angry" instead of "irrational" (Henderson, 2008). This conditioning has permeated the micro fascia of emotional responses to daily life and Rosenthal's study exemplifies how the psychologized approach to understanding emotion often propagates cultural gendered norms.

One brilliant response to Rosenthal's model of non-verbal literacy came from a study by Snodgrass (1985) which subsequently inspired many other interesting studies in the gendering of non-verbal literacy. Snodgrass looked at the relationship between non-verbal cues and power dynamics. She asked, how are non-verbal cues picked up (if at all)

by different people in hierarchical relationships (e.g. boss–employee, student–teacher, parent–child)?[13] (Snodgrass, 1985). The results showed that across the board, in relationships with unequal (hierarchical) power structures, the person with less power was able to better recognize the leader's non-verbal signs. This led Snodgrass to comment that Rosenthal's conclusion on the existence of "women's intuition" (in heterosexual relationships, since only heterosexuals were studied), should actually be labelled "subordinates intuition." Snodgrass drew the conclusion that Rosenthal's gendered research actually points to the ongoing problems and invisibility of the oppression of women, the ubiquity of patriarchy and heteronormativity (Snodgrass, 1985, 1992).

Snodgrass's work points to how "normal" emotional responses that appear on the surface to be "subjective" or "contained" or "contextual" are actually, upon closer examination, bound up with relations of power rather than being the "natural" response of gendered individuals. That is, broader power relationships and structures condition our very intimate responses to things. The way that power is distributed will emerge in our intimate responses and *conditions* the very *mechanisms* of response. Snodgrass's research also points to the ontology of the "contained" emotional subject within the dominant discourse on emotions which posits a centered subject whose emotions are unaffected by broader systems of power and becomes essentialized as though she inherently "feels" more.

Unfortunately, Rosenthal's research informed subsequent popular models/evaluations such as Daniel Goleman's well known "Emotional intelligence" (EI),

[13] She did not examine differences with respect to race/class/gender or other identity categories.

which is used in nearly every type of employment field and many therapeutic models. EI is basically the ability to recognize one's own and other peoples' emotions, to discriminate between different feelings and label them appropriately, and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour (1996). In short, he offers another popularized way of "evolving emotionally." Goleman's work has been a cornerstone in what Sara Ahmed calls the "happiness turn," which is the modern-day trend in the West encouraging individuals to take responsibility for their own happiness by identifying, using, and understanding emotions in "positive ways" in order to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges, defuse conflict, and remain on a productive and goal-oriented program of life (Goleman, 1996; Ahmed, 2010). The sub-programme, according to Ahmed, is linked to productivity and discipline. Readers are never asked to consider that their feelings might be adaptive to a violent and oppressive system of exploitation. Rather they are encouraged to view their emotions as personal and interpersonal. By understanding and taking responsibility for one's emotions, individuals can manage them to become better workers, spouses, and capitalist subjects (Ahmed, 2010). Goleman employs similar assumptions to the psychologized approach regarding the nature of the subject and emotion. That is, emotions are contained in a subject and belong to them; they are identifiable, nameable, and treatable. Consequently, these assumptions can lead to profoundly conservative positions.

Alternatives to the psychologized approach

Critical affect theorists have offered useful critiques of the psychologized approach to understanding emotions, and have attempted to reformulate the concept in

ways that are less individualized and deterministic. For instance, many of these thinkers argue that existing regimes of emotion play a consequential part in the ongoing logic of capitalism (Ahmed, 2010; Berlant, 2011; Cvetkovitch, 2012; Illouz, 2009; Massumi, 2002, 2015). As I mentioned, many of them choose "affect" as the category of focus for precisely the reason that the field of "emotions" is dominated by a discourse that is individualized and deterministic. Moreover, this discourse reifies emotions and is a mainstay in the subsequent work on emotions from the biological sciences, further propagating limiting "facts" about emotions. In this section, I will briefly outline how some critical affect theorists have reformulated the concept of emotions, but have still retained a personalized understanding of emotion. Then I briefly examine Ahmed's complete rejection of the dominant discourse of emotion while still choosing to employ the term (she uses emotion interchangeably with affect).

Many critical affect theorists generally agree that emotions are distinguishable states of consciousness that are personal, retrospective (applied after experience in order to cognitively process experience), and nameable (Massumi, 2002; Probyn, 2005). Accordingly, they should be reserved for "those intimate, distinctly personal, ways of being that are retrospectively named as emotions" and although "personal," emotions in this sense are dislodged from the "psychologized" translation (Massumi, 2002:737). These authors see emotions as relating to "affect" in that they are not only personal responses/reactions but are also part of a broader field that is directly influenced by political and social and environmental systems (Massumi, 2002). From this perspective, emotions are more like "complex reactions" that are manifest mentally and physically, complex in that the term itself still tends to emphasize the conscious and autobiographical

dimensions of the reaction but they are understood as being more social and cultural in origin, manifestation, expression, and in how we understand them (Anderson, 2006; Brennan, 2004; Cvetkovitch, 2012; Massumi, 2002; Thrift, 2004b).

Emotions are part of our "perceptual structures" or "constitutive judgments," and they inform us as to how specific objects events or situations are personally perceived, evaluated, or felt (Anderson, 2006; Massumi, 2002). For Anne Cvetkovitch, for example, affect and emotion are clearly distinguishable: "the former [affect] signals precognitive sensory experience and relations to surroundings, and the latter [emotion], cultural constructs and conscious processes that emerge from them, such as anger, fear, or joy" (Cvetkovitch, 2012: 4). Likewise, Elizabeth Probyn writes, "emotion refers to cultural and social expression of feeling…" (2005:11). From this perspective, there is a location to the emotion—it belongs to "some" body, or "some" mind. Brian Massumi echoes this point when he argues that "an emotion is a subjective content, the sociolinguistic fixing of the quality of an experience which from that point onward is defined as personal" (2002: 737). Sianne Ngai offers a similarly personalized, yet vague definition when she suggests that emotions can be seen as "unusually knotted or condensed interpretations of predicaments" (2005:3). The quote by Ngai is a more poetic way of articulating that emotions are interpretations or manifestations of more complex mental and physical states provoked in interaction within a complex social field. In other words, she suggests that the emotional dimension of experience is one pointed interpretation of something much more difficult to apprehend, simply one knot on a grand tapestry of sensation/experience. This grouping of definitions conceives emotion as interrelated to precognitive sensory experience (affects) and the effects of our interrelations to the

environment. But these definitions still understand emotions as expressed narrowly, "in the flesh" so to speak**.** These perspectives differ from the psychologized approach in that they do not conceive of the subject or emotions in reductionist and essentializing ways, but rather view both emotions and the subject as existing within broader narratives and discourses.

There exists a distinction in the introductory dictionary definition of "emotion" between emotion as an "aroused" state that is differentiated from the "awareness of physical sensations", which is associated with "feeling" (Massumi, 2002). That is, for Massumi, feelings are what "arouse" a "state", and that "state" is the "emotion" (Massumi, 2002). This distinction emphasizes that emotions *are not* feelings and that feelings connote (as we will see below) "body states." According to this line of thinking, emotions are more like an "awareness" of these states. Despite that these definitions articulating something "personal" about emotion, they are less structurally determined than the dominant understandings of emotions. They recognize that the dominant discourses on emotion will shape what is "felt" as an emotion (that is, they are aware of the interplay of discourses), something absent from the psychologized approaches.

In contrast to the critical affect theorists summarized above, Sara Ahmed completely rejects the understanding of emotions in the dominant discourse. Ahmed uses affect and emotion almost interchangeably; both "shape the ways in which parts of the world and the world as a whole appear to us" (Ahmed, 2010: 78). She rejects the dominant, psychologized discourses by abandoning the term as distinct from affect, arguing that emotions actually mean "to disturb", to "move", to "shape"; they are an imminent "in-betweeness" that flows, or circulates between and connects and relates

bodies (both human and non-human) (Ahmed, 2004b). Ahmed's understands emotion in much the same way as affect—as a force or movement that shapes and influences nearly all aspects of life.

Affect

> Affect (1) (verb) – to act upon or influence, esp. in an adverse way "damp affected the spark plugs"; to move or disturb emotionally or mentally "her death affected him greatly"; (Medicine) (of pain, disease, etc.) to attack.
>
> Affect (2) (noun) - (psychology) the emotion associated with an idea or set of ideas. See also affection [from Latin affectus, past participle of afficere to act upon, from ad-to + facere to do]
>
> Affect (3) (verb) – To put on an appearance or show of; make a pretence of to affect ignorance; To imitate or assume, esp. pretentiously to affect an accent; To have or use by preference (e.g. she always affects funeral clothing); To adopt the character, manner, etc., of he was always affecting the politician (life Sciences & Allied Applications /Biology) (of plants or animals) to lie or grow in (e.g.) penguins affect an Arctic climate; To incline naturally or habitually towards- falling drops of liquid affect roundness [from Latin affetare to strive after, pretend to have, related to afficere to affect (1)] (*Collins English Dictionary*, Sixth Edition, 2003)

In everyday usage affect tends to be used as a noun synonymous with emotions and feelings, and is closely affiliated with the dominant discourse on emotions.[14] In contrast, the dictionary definitions above signal affect as an impact, a force, or a direction with which something inclines or assumes. These ways of employing affect indicate a need to distinguish it from emotion. Seigworth and Gregg, in *The Affect Theory Reader* (2010), a compilation of work from key thinkers in the field of affect, offer a sense of how affect is being conceptualized in the academy:

> … there is no pure or originary state for affect. Affect arises in the midst of in-between-ness: in the capacities to act and be acted upon. Affect is an impingement or extrusion of a momentary or sometimes more sustained state of relations as well as the passages (and the duration of passage) of forces or intensities. That is, affect is found in those intensities that pass body to body (human, non-human, part-body and otherwise), in those resonances that circulate about and between and sometimes stick to bodies and worlds, and in the very passages or variations between these intensities and resonances themselves (Seigworth and Gregg, 2010: 15).

In this passage it is worth noting that affect is employed synonymous with force, or intensity, or capacity to "act", and is in "circulation" between and by bodies both human and non. This passage reflects the broader theoretical range found in research on affect in comparison to the categories of emotions and, as we'll see below, feelings. Despite the range, there are key commonalities between various authors in their conceptualizations of affect.

[14] In my interviews, participants did not often use the term and when they did it was used synonymously with emotion or feeling. On occasion, they used it as a transient verb related to feeling (e.g. "the experience at the demonstration affected me intensely" (Kim, interviews).

I begin this section by exploring the key dimension that informs many contemporary conceptualizations of affect: affect concerns the "capacity to affect and be affected," which is the foundational influence of Spinoza's philosophy (Deleuze, 1987; Massumi, 2002; Spinoza, 2000). Following this, I turn to a consideration of more contemporary definitions of affect, many of which are indebted to Spinoza. Finally, this section concludes with a more focused discussion of affect as a kind of intensity or force that suggests conditions of contingency and qualities of relation and tendency (Massumi, 2002; 2015). This understanding of affect will inform the empirical aspect of my research. As I mentioned at the start of this chapter, I am interested in the effects of capitalism's affects on how we engage with emotions in resistance work in a western context. Crucial to this commitment is viewing everyday affective life as an important vantage point from which to examine the conditions and effects of neoliberal-led capitalism (Cvetkovitch, 2012).

Spinoza on Affect

Baruch Spinoza's philosophy introduced to us the idea that capacities do not belong to individuals but are bound up with the ways our bodies are affected by other bodies, and as a result, "you do not know beforehand what a body or a mind can do, in a given encounter, a given arrangement, a given combination" (Deleuze, 2001: 125). For Spinoza, affect is our capacity to act shaped by our encounters with the world and/or our compositions with others. In other words, "capacity" is not something we simply have, as if it were an inherent quality of this or that body (Nadler, 2006). Rather, capacity is a facet of encounters and their affects, which Spinoza articulates as being beyond a subject-

object binary (propositions which greatly influenced the psychoanalytic tradition) (Nadler, 2006). That is, neither affects nor capacities are private experiences possessed by subjects; rather, we are moved and shaped by our interactions "affectively" (Hessing, 1977).

There are three basic concepts that ground Spinoza's ontology: substance, attribute, and mode. The substance (of the universe/existence) is "that which is in itself, and is conceived through itself: in other words, that of which a conception can be formed independently of any other conception" (Ethics, 1, Definition III).[15] For Spinoza, that substance is God; it is identical with the natural world and what he calls our "conatus" (will or appetite) is connected to, or a part of, this whole. Another way to understand this is through the ontological principle of "monism," the idea that reality is one fundamental substance which rejects Descartes' mind/body dualism favouring instead an ontology where body and mind are two attributes of the same substance (Morgan, 2002). Spinoza holds that the "fundamental substance" of reality is God. In short, God does *not* rule over everything, instead, God *is* everything. God is coextensive with the natural world (pantheism) and this pantheism is a rigorously deterministic system where everything is determined by, or follows from, God's nature through a single set of universal laws (Spinoza, 2000). We engage with this system and are a part of it through our conatus.

For Spinoza, when referred solely to the mind, conatus is called "will," and when referred to the mind and body in conjunction, it is called "appetite" (Ethics, 9, Note to Prop IX). Spinoza claimed that "each thing exemplifies an inherent tendency towards

[15] All quotes come from *The Ethics*, by Baruch Spinoza (1951), R. H. M. Elwes (trans.). http://sacred-texts.com/phi/spinoza/ethics/index.htm. Unless otherwise stated the publication year is 1951. The document does not have page numbers but the chapters and propositions are indexed as (Ethics, Part, Proposition or other descriptor (proof, note, corollary etc.).

self-preservation and activity" (Ethics, 9, V11) and "the conatus with which each thing endeavours to persist in its own being is nothing but the actual essence of the thing itself" (Spinoza, 2000: 66). Of course, I have been presenting arguments that contribute to the poststructuralist relationalism that there is no "essential" nature to the "thing", which appears in contrast with Spinoza's notion here. However, Spinoza need not be read as essentialist; he is articulating the relationship between a 'singularity' and 'universality', that neither one is reducible to the other, but both concepts are contained within the other (Deleuze, 1990). Said another way, conatus means "striving" or "endeavour" (the universal- *everything* has a conatus), but also denotes the "what" that is striving (the particular- we *each* have a conatus). The universalism of conatus isn't strictly separated or bounded "in the beginning;" rather, essence is bound up with a broader context that connects us to one another and the world (there is no clear distinction between self and other). In other words, everything for Spinoza is relational, and our capacity is an emergent quality of relations. There is a constant striving to preserve essence in the face of continuous encounters that are constantly affecting that which is *encountering*. Spinoza writes about freedom in relation to preservation of our conatus; we are constantly looking to preserve our "essence" through encounters. He doesn't believe that free will is something that is inherently possible for a *single* body, but he does believe in human freedom and that to some extent we are already free. However, freedom, for Spinoza, is the practice of increasing our store of "adequate ideas"—that is, learning how we are determined, and this learning is generated through our encounters (Spinoza, 2000; Spinoza, 2006).

The second component of his ontology, "attribute" can be mentioned here briefly, since it ties into his idea of freedom. Attribute is "that which the intellect perceives as constituting the essence of substance." For Spinoza, we can actually go beyond this "intellectual perception" and aim to exercise our freedom by increasing our store of adequate ideas (by learning how we are determined), and realizing that the essence of a substance is actually the same as the fundamental substance or essence, God *(*Ethics, 1, Definition IV).

Thus, the freedom of "learning how we are determined" is "a feature of actions that are active and rational, performed with a minimum of constraint and external coercion" (Spinoza, 2000: 3). In Michael Morgan's introduction to Spinoza's complete works he says, "people are free to the degree that they love God, understand God, and indeed emulate God, but for Spinoza these activities and aspirations are no different from seeking to understand nature and to live in harmony with natural law" (Morgan, 2002: 3). In other words, freedom is found in our capacity to understand how we are determined (i.e. form "adequate ideas") and how and why we act as we do. Consequently, Spinoza advocated democratic republicanism, which he saw as the natural outcome of an ethic of rational self-discipline and peace of mind. These could be cultivated in a lawful society in which all members attempt to enhance the wellbeing of all rational citizens and restrain harmful self-interest (Morgan, 2002: 3).

Finally, mode is "the modifications (*affectiones*) of substance, or that which exists in, and is conceived through, something other than itself" (Ethics, 1, Definition V). In other words, modes, are "things and their states" that make up the natural world (Morgan, 2002: x) and these are either *modes of thought* or *modes of extension*. Most importantly

for our purposes, for Spinoza, affect (*Affections*) is a mode. He writes, "by 'emotion' [or affect] I mean the modifications of the body, whereby the active power of the said body is increased or diminished, aided or constrained, and also the ideas of such modifications" (Ethics, 3, III). The affections are not "personal" feelings. Instead, *affectus* (Spinoza's affection) is an ability to affect and be affected. It is a pre-personal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another. It also implies "an augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act" (Massumi, 1987: xvi). Affection is each such state, considered as an encounter between the affected body and a second, affecting body (Massumi, 2002).

Steven Nadler writes that Spinoza's ethics defines affect as a change in an individual's power: "It is important to note…that an affect (for example, an emotion) is not the cause of the change; rather, it is the transition itself from one condition to another. One experiences or undergoes an affect. It is, he says, 'a passage' [transitio]" (2006: 202). So, affect is either the move from a better condition to a worse condition, or the improvement to a better condition; it is not the end result of the move (Nadler, 2006). In other words, it can't be reduced to mere events—as a capacity: it takes place before and after encounters. The following table clarifies these transitions:

Table 1. AFFECTS [Table from Nadler, 2006: 202]

(Changes in an individual's power or conatus)

/ \

/ \

Active affects Passive affects

/ \

/ \

(brought about by the individual) (brought about by external things)

/ / \

Improvement (in individual's condition) Improvement Degeneration

[Joy] [Joy] [Sadness]

As seen in Table 1, if an improvement in our conditions comes about wholly through our own resources via our own knowledge of what is good for us, the transition is the result of active affects. In this case we are said to be "the adequate cause of any of these modifications" which Spinoza terms "the emotion of activity." Only when we have adequate knowledge of a cause or event can we be said to be acting, another claim that poststructuralists would argue is not possible (Ethics, 3, III). To "be active" is an/the ethical precept for Spinoza. While he does not seem to think that we can be entirely free of the passions, he stresses that we should strive to master them.

In contrast to actions that are brought about through our adequate ideas, Spinoza suggests that we are also passively affected by encounters or compositions. Passive

affects, or passions, result in "transitions" in our conditions producing either improvements (joy) or diminishments (sadness). Spinoza suggests "the passions are all functions of the ways in which external things affect our powers or capacities," and this notion speaks directly to my work, because it is an acknowledgment that our feelings and emotions are conditioned/affected by broader systems, and that encounters with sadness can generate sadness, as in the case of sad militancy (Nadler, 2006: 235). While he provides a catalogue of the passions, Spinoza recognizes only three primitive or primary emotions: "pleasure, pain, and desire" (The Ethics, 4, Note to Prop IV). Pleasure (or Joy) is "the transition of a man from a less to a greater perfection" (The Ethics, 4, Prop II). Pain (or Sadness) is "the transition of a man from a greater to a less perfection" (The Ethics, 4, Prop III). Desire is defined as human striving (or appetite) together with the consciousness of striving (The Ethics, 3, XI). What human beings desire to do is to secure their own interests (which Spinoza construes as perseverance in being). In other words, human desire is part of the striving for perseverance. However, Spinoza's depiction of the passions rejects a mind and body dualism for "if something increases the power of our bodies, the idea of the thing also increases the power of our mind; the same is true of the reverse" (as cited in Nadler, 2006: 68).

Spinoza's depiction of the passions also challenges the "within" versus "without" of subjectivity. This way of understanding subjectivity is nicely summed up in Massumi's introduction to Deleuze and Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987) where they define the terms affect/affection:

> "Neither word denotes a personal feeling [sentiment in Deleuze and Guattari]. L'affect (Spinoza's affectus) is an ability to affect and be affected. It is a

> prespersonal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another and implying an augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act. L'affection (Spinoza's affection) in each such state [is] considered as an encounter between the affected body and a second, affecting body" (Massumi, 1987: xvi).

It is worth noting that Spinoza uses the term "joy" to describe encounters that increase our capacities to act, and "sadness" when the results are reversed. The notion of "capacity" to act is articulate by the terms "augmentation" and "diminution" by Brian Massumi. I like Massumi's terms because using "joy" and "sadness" might mean that there is something inherently depleting about sadness, when how we interpret what is "joy" and "sadness" (these and other sensations of "emotions") is a process that is embedded and informed by broader contexts. And, as I noted in the section on emotions above, there is a long history of colonial, conditioned, gendered, and predetermined ways of identifying and articulating emotions (Ahmed, 2004b). Moreover, we saw that often many of the proprioceptive responses on the body are similar, yet how we process and identify with them is different (e.g. fear, excitement, anger, etc.). What follows from this psychologizing approach is a system to understand emotions that is deterministic. This is to say that we are encouraged to repeat ad infinitum a process (apprehend, identify, label, articulate, treat) that affects our capacities "to feel" from the moment of "apprehension" of sensation (Ahmed, 2004b, 2010). This dominant way of organizing affective experiences limits the ability to feel something "other" than a narrow grouping of predetermined emotions and to articulate and express sensory experience in more creative ways. In short, other possibilities of expressing and articulating sensory experience in the

everyday may be creatively obscured, or in the words of Massumi, "diminish" our sense of hope (2002).

Thus, using "augmentation" or "diminution" instead of "joy" and "sadness" is useful for analysis of the ways different affects impact or enhance capacities without signalling absolutes. "Capacity" as a quality of being that can be "enhanced" or "diminished" gives a vocabulary to describe and unfasten "emotionality" from the dominant and prescriptive way of expressing emotions (i.e. positive, negative, happy, sad etc).

Affect: Deleuze and Guattari

Brian Massumi makes the genealogy of affect studies evident in his introduction to *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987). Massumi outlines how the work of Spinoza has significantly motivated Deleuze and Guattari's work, and he highlights how their exploration of the principle "capacity to affect and be affected" has led to a new language of affect as force, intensity, or "becoming," with an emphasis in his own work on what he calls the ongoing '" drama of contingency'" which simply means that a feature of affect is its contingency (Massumi, 1987: 88). They have impacted scholarship across disciplines and according to Ann Cvetkovitch, "Deluezian terminology has helped to loosen the hegemony of psychoanalysis as the way to describe emotional experience" (2012: 4). This "loosening" is due to the expanded lexicon given to us from their work and their conceptualizing of affect as a concept that relates to capacity and as intrinsic to the relations between things, both human/non-human. Cvetkovitch goes on to say that "Deleuzian projects have also enabled a fuller vocabulary for accounts of sensory

experience that have emerged from cultural studies of embodiment and the turn away from Cartesian splits between body and mind" (Cvetkovitch, 2012:4). The fuller vocabulary is one that uses terms and metaphors that are often borrowed from quantum physics. They attempt to capture aspects of affect that are difficult to articulate by asking us to think of it as a force, potential, or intensity that is both pre- and post-cognition, and always contingent (Anderson, 2006; Brennan, 2004; Massumi, 2010; Thrift, 2004a).

My objective here is not to give a comprehensive summary of Deleuze and Guattari's work on affect. Instead, I present their take on Spinoza's "capacity to affect and be affected" because it has influenced many authors writing in the field of affect studies, and also because it provides a useful starting point to talk about the affects of capitalism on how we engage with emotions in autonomy-oriented resistance work, and to lead into a discussion that will conclude the dissertation on where we might look to hope in a politics of affect (Massumi, 2015).

According to Warren and Shaw (1985), Deleuze and Guattari were influenced by the theoretical work of ecological psychologist James Gibson. In James Gibson's writing on ecological interactions, he employs the term "affordance" which relates to, and informs, Deleuze's understanding of "affect" (Gibson, 1966; Warren et al.,1985). Gibson used "affordance" to emphasize what the environment affords an individual in the way of "discrimination," and he defines discrimination as the "action capabilities" of things depending on their affordances in a particular context (Gibson, 1966). In other words, depending on the arrangement of things and their "affordances," particular possibilities emerge that impact the ability for human and non-human subjects to "act" (1996:12). Likewise, "capacities" for Deleuze and Guattari are akin to the way that Gibson used the

term "action capabilities" (Gibson, 1966). For example, a piece of ground has its own intrinsic properties determining how slanted, vertical, flat, concave, or rigid it is. But, the capability of a piece of ground to "afford" support to a walking human/non-human is not just another intrinsic property of the ground. This "capacity to affect" depends on whether or not there *is* an animal/human around, giving capacity to affect a relational quality (Warren et al.,1985). What/how an individual "affords" or "is afforded" (to affect or be affected) will depend on many factors. One factor to illustrate this is their relative spatial scales: the surface of a pond would not afford a large animal a walking medium, but it does to a tiny insect because the insect will not break through the surface tension (Warren et al., 1985). This example illustrates that affordances are symmetric, or in Spinoza's terms, they involve both capacities to affect and be affected.

Gibson gives another example of affordance: a hole in the ground affords a fleeing animal a place to hide, but the animal could also dig its own hole, thus affecting or changing the ground itself. Similarly, an animal may flee because a predator affords it danger but the prey animal itself affords nutrition to the predator (Gibson, 1966). These brief "action-shots" show how there are multiple possibilities that exist at once without any pre-determined outcomes. Thus, the assemblages[16] Deleuze and Guattari put forth—"walking-animal-solid ground-gravity" or "predator-prey-hole in the ground"—in the section "Becoming Animal" of *A Thousand Plateaus* express how capacities are dependent on the component properties of the assemblage, but not reducible to these

[16] This definition of assemblages comes from the Smith (2012): "assemblages are ways to think about the organization of the social world. For Deleuze and Guattari, there does not exist a fixed and stable ontology for the social world that proceeds from "atoms" to "molecules" to "materials." Rather, social formations are assemblages of other complex configurations, and they in turn play roles in other, more extended configurations" (Smith, URL accessed June 1, 2016, paragraph 1: http://understandingsociety.blogspot.ca/2012/11/assemblage-theory.html)

properties (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). In other words, these affordances are action possibilities of things that can be mobilized differently relative to different relationships, stimuli, or contexts (Gibson, 1966). In other words, affect is a constant and emergent quality of relationships.

For Deleuze and Guattari, the relationships between organisms will shape and be shaped by their ongoing capacities to affect and be affected. Biological organisms are capable of forming what they call "heterogeneous assemblages" (akin to Gibson's "ecosystems") and within these, we play a complex role in a food web, wherein our "capacities" within this web are shaped by a constant flow of matter and energy (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987). Deleuze and Guattari present the complexity of assemblage formation as being an interplay between an indeterminate number of tendencies. For example, an assemblage can consist of "endogenous tendencies" (e.g. the dividing of a cell within a particular environment) alongside "open-ended capacities" (e.g. potential of capacities to be affected and affect; slant of ground for walking or surface tension affording walking-surface; ideal pH of dirt for bacteria to grow), or what they call the "longitudes" and "latitudes" of the assemblage. Assemblages, in short, are the product of the way that the flow of matter and energy have formed or assembled (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). In the following explanation of "longitude" and "latitude," Deleuze and Guattari gesture to an integral part of their understanding of "capacity to affect and be affected" which is the ongoing and ever-present *potential* of all encounters:

> If we are Spinozists we will not define a thing by its form, nor by its organs and its functions, nor as a substance or a subject. Borrowing terms from the Middle Ages, or from geography, we will define it by longitude or latitude. A body can be anything; it can be an animal, a body of sounds, a mind or an idea; it can be a

> linguistic corpus, a social body, a collectivity…we call longitude of a body the set of relations of speed and slowness, of momentum and rest, between particles that compose it from this point of view, that is, between unformed elements. We call latitude the set of affects that occupy a body at each moment, that is, the intensive states of an anonymous force (force for existing, capacity for being affected) (1987: 128).

What I want to highlight from the quote above is the stress that Deleuze and Guattari place on *contingency* and *potential.* The unformed elements are the "very otherwise" that could have happened, which would yield a different "set of affects that occupy a body at each moment" or a changed "force for existing, capacity for being affected" (1987: 128). In other words, emerging compositions and complex assemblages both shape and are shaped by the capability of things in relation to other things creating a constant, productive, and unspecified relationship between "affecting" and "being affected" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Despite the indeterminacy of "how" the capability of a thing will be affected, the forming and unforming of assemblages are not random, or neutral.[17] If we shift the arrangement, quality, or characteristics of relations, we affect the assemblages and the potentials to affect and be affected. We can impact our capacities. To harken back to Ahmed, but in Deleuzian terms, I argue that less oppressive social assemblages must have different emotional assemblages than those that currently exist with the dominant order, requiring a shift from the dominance that the hegemonic discourses on emotions has in the shaping of boundaries between self vs. other.

For Deleuze and Guattari, all assemblages have *emerged* alongside the co-presence

[17] In A Thousand Plateaus Deleuze and Guattari are concerned with the transformative affects of capitalism on our souls/becoming machine.

of all potentials, and "unformed elements" are the "very otherwise" that could have happened. In other words, all social phenomena could be "very otherwise," with the potential of this "very otherwise" always existing simultaneously in the constant forming and un-forming of assemblages, which could also be viewed as the ongoing relationship between "being" and "becoming," the force and intensity of which are qualities of the constant flow of energy and matter (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

For example, "being" can be an assemblage, which is another way to say the creation of a territory, a space, or a relatively stable moment of relations or connections between bodies (e.g. moods or sustained emotional states) (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). An assemblage could also include the university, me, this dissertation, or my neighbourhood. Anything can "assemble" together, but the concept becomes useful because specific discourses will work together to generate emerging qualities or tendencies of a system, qualities that are strengthened and calcify over time (e.g. emotions, affect, and feeling (EAF) are a collection of discourses, an assemblage, that together inform an ontology of the subject; under capitalism, "emotions" dominates this assemblage as a primary influence which has affects on how the subject "acts"). Our "capacities" within this web are impacted (affected) by the way that energy and matter are assembled, so most importantly for the purposes of this dissertation, social movements, affinity groups, free schools, social centres, emotional scripts and the like, are all forming assemblages (and all part of broader heterogeneous assemblages or "ecosystems") with particular tendencies**.** The creation of alternatives to the dominant order affects the dominant assemblages and therefore our capacities to affect and be affected.

Andrew Murphie (2010) offers a helpful analogy to tie these concepts together. He points to "the shifting intensity in the infinite number of possible connections between neurons" as an example of "one part of the world in which affect resides." He expands on this point:

> "Over time, this infinity actualizes as specific connections mixed in with the broader connection of the world beyond neurons, (that is, as thoughts). These connections are never quite removed from their potential for infinite other connections. In short, affect is the emergence of actual relations on the one hand, and their falling back into virtual relations (relational potential) on the other" (Murphie, 2010).[18]

This quote is useful because it portrays how the force and intensities of our shifting relations, capacities, and powers to affect and be affected are making and experiencing the "world as it worlds "(Murphie, 2010). In the case of sensory experience, disentangling "how we feel" from dominant assemblages that include how we intimately express ourselves, will affect the assemblage and vice versa. What might follow is the forming of new spaces to creatively engage with experience beyond the existing and limited ways that the dominant discourses on emotions and the assemblage of the "feeling" self.

Massumi also offers insight on how Deleuze and Guattari's work on affect relates to hope and resistance:

> … an emotion is a very partial expression of affect. It only draws on a limited

[18] The quote above is particularly interesting for me since I have an infant. It is incredible to watch the way in which synaptic connections are literally emerging and forming based on a variability of conditions, many of which seem mysterious to me.

> selection of memories and only activates certain reflexes or tendencies, for example. No one emotional state can encompass all the depth and breadth of our experiencing of experiencing—all the ways our experience redoubles itself. The same thing could be said for conscious thought. So when we feel a particular emotion or think a particular thought, where have all the other memories, habits, tendencies gone that might have come at the point? And where have the bodily capacities for affecting and being affected that they're inseparable from gone? There's no way they can all be actually expressed at any given point. But they're not totally absent either, because a different selection of them is sure to come up at the next step. They're still there, but virtually—in potential. Affect as a whole, then, is the virtual co-presence of potentials (Massumi 2015: 5).

Massumi's definition of affect as the "virtual co-presence of potentials" is useful for thinking about the *possibilities* for emotional expression, or for bodily capacities for affecting and being affected that have not emerged within their current assemblages. As Deleuze and Guattari put it:

> "We know nothing about a body until we know what it can do, what its affects are, how they can or cannot enter into composition with other affects, with the affects of another body, either to destroy that body or to be destroyed by it, either to exchange actions and passions with it or to join with it in composing a more powerful body" (1987: 257).

What can be drawn from this widely cited interpretation of Spinoza by Deleuze and Guattari is that there is hope to be found in the drama of contingencies. Spinoza's answer is "that an affect can be changed only through the energetic creation of another affect: specifically, the ethical cultivation of capacities that change visible conduct and a practice of tending to belonging-as-such that creates new potentialities by enacting 'good

encounters'" (as cited in Anderson, 2006: 738). If there are depleting emotional patterns that emerge across experiences from those resisting the dominant order, then there is a way to talk creatively about where to find a "very otherwise" way of addressing these that impact our capacities to affect and be affected, in expansive ways, or the "energetic creation of another affect" through "ethical cultivation of capacities", the possibilities of which nourish hope (Anderson, 2006).

Affect as Intensity, Tendency, and Relation

One of the leading thinkers in the field of affect is Brian Massumi. He makes clear distinctions between affect, emotion, and feeling. He argues that emotions are personal and autobiographical, that feelings give "intensity" to affect, and that affect is an all encompassing force, emerging into particularities and impacting the body precognitively and proprioceptively (Massumi, 2002). He borrows from Antonio Damasio in his understanding of the relationship between feeling and affect. For instance, he argues that "feelings" would not "feel" if they had no intensity (this intensity is affect), and without feelings we would not "move" towards or away from decisions (Massumi, 2002). In other words, for Massumi, affect is the body's way of preparing itself for action in a given circumstance by adding a quantitative dimension of intensity to the quality of an experience. This intensity is "feeling." Massumi asserts that intensities are being "infolded" into the body at all times, which gives "life," so to speak, to our "feelings." Our feelings then in turn guide our decision making. Yet, for Massumi, the body "doesn't just absorb pulses or discrete stimulations; it infolds contexts." Therefore, he suggests "the body has a grammar of its own that cannot be fully captured in language" (Massumi,

2002: 30)

Massumi argues that generally how we orient ourselves in our environment relates to how we feel and how we feel is textured by the complexity of the effects that different affects have on us (Massumi, 2002). Specifically, as our bodies constantly "infold" a context, if another body (real or virtual) is expressing intensity in that context, one intensity is infolded into another (Massumi, 2002). By resonating with the intensity of the contexts it infolds, the body attempts to ensure that it is prepared to respond appropriately to a given circumstance. To illustrate this claim, Massumi draws on a case study by the neurologist Oliver Sacks. Sacks describes a woman who loses feeling in her leg and describes the leg as feeling "missing." However, when the woman hears music she begins to involuntarily tap her leg (Massumi, 2002: 170-1). Sack's conclusion is that the leg had become disconnected from her conscious awareness but not her "proprioception," defined as a "continuous but unconscious sensory flow from the movable parts of our body (muscles, tendons, joints) by which their position and tone and motion are continually monitored and adjusted, but in a way which is hidden from us because it is autonomic and unconscious" (Sacks as cited in Massumi, 2002: 43). The affect of music added an *intensity* (or sense of urgency) to her proprioception and that is why the music (the recollection of which is partially stored in the body) could move this woman's leg when "will" alone could not.

This case is interesting because it exemplifies the way in which affect *always* precedes will and consciousness (Massumi, 2002: 29).[19] He says that the "missing" leg

[19] I recently watched a documentary called "I Am" that showed research reflecting how affect precedes will and consciousness. When participants were show both neutral and disturbing images, our bodies responded

example shows us two things. First, "affect is a non-conscious experience of intensity. It is a moment of unformed and unstructured potential" (Massumi, 2002: 25). Second, music can transmit affect. The first point, that affect precedes will and consciousness, was a conviction held by both Spinoza and Deleuze. Deleuze argued that perception is pre or post affect (Massumi, 2002). For example, if we were to stick a pin into our hand and move it about, the perception of pain would not be that of "a pin" but of a sharpness intercepting our flesh—at least at first, indicating that perception is an aftereffect of affect; that is, affect "evokes a vibration gathered by a receptive organ" (as cited in Massumi, 1993: 95). In Spinoza's philosophy, affect came before or after cognition. Recall that for Spinoza, affect was not the end but the transition between states that reveals a shift in the bodies capacity (to affect or be affected).

With regard to the second point, that music can transmit affect, for Massumi it is affect's "abstractivity" that makes it transmittable in ways that feeling and emotions are not. Massumi points out that any communication that is perceptible (e.g. facial expressions, respiration, tone of voice, or posture), on whatever level, can potentially transmit affect (Massumi, 2002). Therefore, arguably every form of mediated communication can transmit affect (Brennan, 2004; Massumi 2002). The example of the woman with the dancing foot brings to life, literally, how affect has a transformative power that augments or diminishes our capacities to act.

Two other qualities, or terms that Massumi puts forth to describe affect are a) relation and b) tendency. Relation points to exactly what Spinoza thought to be the starting point of affect, the in-betweeness of encounters that is always a quality of relation

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to the images before they were even shown, evidence that suggested that our bodies could accurately predict what the image would be.

between bodies, or, the potential that always exists but has not yet emerged of how a body will affect or be affected in a given encounter. Despite the possibility for repetition, Massumi explains that the body (bodies) in a "relational event will play out differently every time. In repeating, it takes up the past differently. In taking up the past differently, it creates new potentials for the future. The region of occurrent relation is a point of potentiation. It is where things begin anew. Where things begin anew is where they were already present in tendency" (Massumi, 2015: 50). This presence of potential in relations, which is an inherent part of repetition, leads to another key quality or term Massumi uses to describe affect, that of tendency. Tendency describes the inclinations of movement of bodies. Massumi writes that "the patterns of movement through these affective transitions are weighted for a particular body or particular situation, as more or less accessible, more or less ready to go. There's an activation not only of the body, but of the body's tendencies, as they move into and through situations" (Massumi, 2015: 50). In my work, these terms can help us to think through how affects might be creating particular "relational complexes" within western radical organizing. Despite the propensities for conflicts to play out in dramatic and disharmonious ways, there is also hope to be found in the fact that the organization of power that shapes these tendencies is constantly needing to be regenerated through "a matrix of variation that forces you to rethink the terms involved each time" (Massumi, 2015:50). Looking at how different tendencies and qualities of relations augment and diminish our capacities to act can give a method to try and comprehend more deeply how/why/when feelings of hopefulness can arise and be maintained in resistance efforts. Opening up spaces to engage politically "inbetween" or away from constant presuppositions that are weighted towards the

gloomy and discouraging prevailing of capitalism can be found and cultivated if we believe that our relations and tendencies are radical political spaces. Assuming that, as Massumi suggests, we apprehend affect by infolding intensities into the body which then give life to our feelings, then how we orient ourselves in our environments relates directly to the translation of different affects into effects. It is important then to understand where and when affect has exerted effects. But because affect can be precognitive, this can be difficult to do. We don't always know where and when we have been affected, or if there is a predictability to the affective 'paths' that a body can take.[20] In the following section, I consider a subset of affect theory that has grappled with the problem of recognizing and representing affect.

Apprehending Affect

In the field of geography, Nigel Thrift has worked precisely on the problem of representing affect. Influenced by Spinoza, Deleuze and Guattari, and Brian Massumi, Thrift has developed a well-known classification of affect he called "non-representational" theory (NRT), meaning literally, unable to be represented (Thrift, 2008). Like others influenced by Spinoza, he argues that affects are attached to things, relations, ambitions, institutions, etc. and that all these things are composites. He argues that we can apprehend affect through these compositions. Once apprehended, the subject has the potential to articulate her awareness of affect but always only partially (Thrift, 2004b). In other words, affects are a "body's apprehension of the world," but this apprehension is only partially known (Thrift, 2008: 152). Resonating with Massumi,

[20] Massumi argues that bodies that are "figured" in capitalist relations *do* have a limited predictability of actions, or a limit to their possibilities, which is another way of describing 'tendency' (Massumi, 2015).

Thrift suggests that "affects act in the nervous system not of persons but of worlds" (as cited in Berlant, 2011: 14). From this perspective, affects are transpersonal and known indirectly. Thrift suggests that affects are revealed (or their existence signalled) in moments of indeterminacy, undecidability and ambivalence. Therefore, despite the difficultly of representing affects, evidence of their existence can be found in "the abandonment of subject-predicate forms of thought" or we can find evidence of the existence of affect in "what can be 'felt' or 'recognized' as in general, a sense of the 'tone' of any situation" (Thrift, 2004a: 84-5). All of this is to say that "capturing" affect in language is unlikely but affects can be "apprehended," meaning they are exerting effects and having impacts, but these are not always easy to notice or manipulate. Apprehension of affect, Thrift argues, happens in the body:

> "...only the smallest part of thinking is explicitly cognitive. But, where, then, does all the other thinking lie? It lies in the body, understood not as a fixed residence for 'mind' but as Bruno Latour says 'a dynamic trajectory by which we learn to register and become sensitive to what the world is made of' (Thrift, 2004a: 90).

Echoing Massumi, Thrift goes on to say affect "lies in the full range of micro-kinetic nerve languages that call us into being, not just vision (which is so often assumed to be the touchstone of knowledge) but all the senses (including senses of bodily movement like proprioception)" (Thrift, 2004a: 90). Proprioception is an interesting component of any conceptualization of affect, emotion, and feeling because it presents us with the notion that there are affects pressing upon us at all times, yet we can only ever partially apprehend them in the body. It is a mystery to us why we sense or express indications of

affect. We must ask what is the "quota," so to speak, before certain thresholds are reached in our capacities to be affected?

Yet another example from the field of geography and the work on non-representational theory is Ben Anderson (2006), a scholar whose work is a contemporary translation of Spinozan philosophy. He puts forth a decentred theory of subjectivity where affect is understood as a capacity to act born of encounters or compositions between bodies (human or otherwise) that are pre-cognitive (Anderson, 2006). Anderson conceives "affect as a transpersonal capacity which a body has to be affected (through an affection) and to affect (as the result of modifications)" (Anderson, 2006: 735). For Anderson, being affected and "affecting" are therefore two sides of the same dynamic shift, or change, in the body. They emerge from a continuous logic of *transitions* that take place during spatially and temporally distributed encounters: "each transition is accompanied by a variation in capacity: a change in which powers to affect and be affected are addressable by a next event and how readily addressable they are" (Anderson, 2006: 735). For Anderson, affect emerges from relations between bodies that are always already entangled within relations; thus, he claims "the materialities of space-time [are] always already affective" (2006: 736). Like Thrift, Anderson argues that we apprehend affect precognitively through the body, and our capacities are constantly shifting and intermeshed within broad and complex relations. The body apprehends affect, gesturing to its existence and real effects, but the problem persists in that we have a hard time representing it.

The non-representational nature of affect, and the resulting imprecision and ambiguity of our attempts to understand it, makes it difficult to operationalize and apply

the concept to empirical situations. For the purposes of my research, I will take what I find most useful from these influential affect theorists in order to understand how affect shapes resistance.

To conclude this section on affect, I want to draw out that what emerges between bodies in composition, expressed as varying capacities to act, reveals the importance of considering affects and emotions (sadness, joy, or otherwise) in understanding social mobilization. Together, emotions and affect serve to move and align us towards or away from others by helping to define and blur the contours of individual and community, self and other. Theories that place affect and emotions as key components of "capacity" invite a deeper reflection on what is negotiated and what actually impacts on our desire to live lives-in-common, in a broader social climate, both political and economic. In short, how people *feel* in both active spaces and in "everyday" life, and what the feelings *themselves* might tell us, gives us insights into how and why people come together and move and act against oppression. This leads us to the final category of "feeling", a related yet distinct category in the field of affect studies.

Feeling

> Feeling (Noun) – sense of touch; the ability to experience physical sensations, such as heat, pain, etc.; the sensation so experienced; a state of mind; a physical or mental impression *"a feeling of warmth"*; fondness; sympathy *"to have a great deal of feeling for someone"*; an ability to feel deeply *"a person of feeling";* a sentiment *"a feeling that the project is feasible"*; an impression or mood; atmosphere *"the feeling of a foreign city"*; an emotional disturbance, especially

anger or dislike *"a lot of bad feeling about the increase in taxes"*; intuitive appreciation and understanding *"a feeling for words"*; sensibility in the performance of something*; (plural)* emotional or moral sensitivity, as in relation to principles or personal dignity (especially in the phrase hurt or injure the feelings of); See have feelings for

Feeling (adjective) – sentient; sensitive; expressing or containing emotion; warm-hearted; sympathetic.

The immediate contrast between the dictionary definition of feeling to that of emotion is the link between "feeling," "the body," and "touch". Whereas emotions in the dominant discourse signal the subject's articulation (mental or psychic experience) of sensation, "feeling" often signifies the location or the mechanics of the sensory reception. In my view, this is what brings feeling closer to the category of affect. The above connotations correspond with a common notion in the field of affect: feelings are physiological sensations whereas emotions are the complex psychological interpretations of these sensations (Wetherell, 2012). Feelings are unique in that often they are experiences of sensations that cannot adequately be expressed using either "emotion" or "affect" (Ratcliff, 2008). There is a dominant view in the field of affect studies that feeling is the perception of sensation on a corporeal level. This understanding of feeling coincides with the dictionary definition articulated above as a noun that includes a "sense of touch, or the ability to experience physical sensations, such as heat, pain, etc., or the sensation so experienced." Feeling is portrayed as being found in the body, directly correlating through touch, or sensation, via a process of interpreting said sensation.

Likewise, there is a dominant view that having a "sense" of where a sensation is occurring *is* that which we call "feeling" (Damasio, 1994, 2003; Massumi, 2002; Ratcliff, 2008; Wetherell, 2012). Stated another way, there is a "common sense" notion that all "bodily feelings" are simply perceptions of body states. Of course, one connotation of feeling is precisely that: sensations are simply registers of feeling. For example, when I touch snow, I *feel* it is cold. As we explored above, depending on the context, perceptions of feelings become integrated into "emotional experience" and categorized using a standard list of "emotions" (i.e. fear, anger, happiness, disgust, sadness, grief, guilt, jealousy, joy, envy, and their derivatives (Ekman, 1992, 1993, 1994). There is usually an accompanying theoretical line in the field of affect studies that the relationship between emotion, feeling, and affect is a flow (sometimes criticized as being a "layer-cake" model; Ahmed, 2004b; Cvetkovitch, 2012, Massumi, 2015) moving from "outside" the body to "inside" the body, wherein affects are the least "cognitive," emotion is the most "cognitive," and feeling sort of bridges the two.[21] Along this line, how we interpret feelings and "read" our relationships in the world is an ongoing interplay between affect, feeling, and emotion in a flow that goes from affect, through feeling, to emotions (Anderson, 2006; Damasio, 1994, 2003; Thrift, 2008; Massumi, 2002, 2015).

Antonio Damasio, a neuroscientist whose work is used often by social theorists in affect studies, puts forth the aforementioned "layer-cake" understanding of emotions, affect, and feelings. When he portrays the relationship between feelings and intensity, articulated in the same way as Massumi, Damasio says, "without affect, feelings do not 'feel' because they have no intensity, and without feelings rational decision-making

[21] By "cognitive" I mean apprehended, recognized, or articulated psychologically/consciously.

becomes problematic" (1994: 204-222). For Damasio, we experience and register affects as sensations "felt" on the body that are processed subjectively and biographically, and also "felt" in an emotional sense. Then, depending on how they are processed, they drive our "rational-decision-making" (Damasio, 1994; 2003). Damasio singles out feeling as being a "bridge" between affect and emotion because it is the physiological registering of sensations into interpretation (2003).

Although Damasio indicates a quasi-deterministic relationship between the categories of affect, feeling, and emotion, he also says that feeling is responsible for the "background orientations" through which experience as a whole is structured (Damasio, as cited in Ratcliff: 60). In his book *Looking for Spinoza* (2003), Damasio says that feelings are "bodily states" which influence one's awareness and constitute the basic structure of "being there" or a "hold on things'" and therefore feeling functions as a presupposed context for all intellectual and practical activity (Damasio, 2003). For Damasio, feelings are how the body is being affected through the senses and function as an ongoing background "register." The idea that feelings are a complex and constant background register points to a "cause-effect" relationship whereby this basic structure and background register "leads," so to speak, to the process of intellectual and practical activity of a subject; this is how we orient our way through "reality." Again, the term "proprioception" is useful to expand on this particular idea. To refresh, the definition Damasio gives for proprioception is as follows: "one's explicit and implicit sense of bodily states unmediated by vision and touch" (Damasio, 2003: 60). Sacks' patient is a perfect example. As a background register, there is a constant "feed" of information between the body surfaces (feelings) and what ends up being classified is "cognitive" or

"emotional" (Damasio, 2003). This view of feeling as background register still holds feelings to be like a physiological bridge between affect and emotion or cognition, with affects impressing themselves upon us which are then sensed by our feelings and then sorted and classified emotionally (Damasio, 2003).

A compelling, yet divergent perspective on the definition of "feeling" in the field of affect is by philosopher Matthew Ratcliff who argues that neither "affect" nor "emotion" captures a specific category of feelings of "being" (Ratcliff, 2008). In his book *The Feeling of Being* (2008), he insists that "everyday talk of 'feeling' is not restricted to emotional feeling and the current emphasis on emotions has led to a neglect of other kinds of feeling" (Ratcliff, 2008:1). For Ratcliff, our orientations to the world are "felt," but these feelings do not fit existing dominant definitions of "feeling" as either a sensory feed, or background register, or synonym for emotion. He argues that neither affect nor emotion can capture a sense of "being" or "reality" that connects us to *world experience.* He uses "world experience" to describe "ways of finding ourselves in the world—that there is a world and we are 'in it.'" For Ratcliff, the world is "constituted by feeling" and not "emotion" or "affect" in everyday usage (Ratcliff, 2008:1). Feelings such as "belonging, separation, unfamiliarity, power, control, being part of something, being at one with nature and 'being there'" all speak to ways we find ourselves in relation to the world with our bodies and senses of "being" (Ratcliff, 2008: 2). This stands in contrast to the notion that feeling is literally the experience of bodily sensations, and instead articulates something more phenomenological. Feelings can be in the body but of something outside the body. In other words, one is not always aware of a particular "body event" even though that is where feelings occur.

Again we can turn to proprioception as a useful way to analyze the category of "feelings of being" because it speaks to implicit and explicit senses of bodily states "unmediated by vision and touch" (Ratcliff, 2008). The structure of proprioception is complicated and it is not my intention to delve into it here, but the point is in Ratcliff's understanding of feeling, it is clearly *not* restricted to one's *awareness* of bodily states but also can capture something beyond "vision or touch" (Damasio, 1994; Massumi, 2002; Ratcliff, 2008). Proprioception relates to feelings of "being," constitutes a *sense* of "reality", and of finding ourselves in the world, and feelings of being are responsible for the *sense* of reality incorporated into experience, with other people and even oneself. Feelings of being can inform us of something that is like an embodiment of affect; because it can be articulated and *felt,* it is accessible in a way that affect as force or intensity is not, blurring the relationship between affect, feeling, and emotion. For example, things can feel "unreal" and people often talk literally about a sense of reality and its varying intensities. Objects, for instance, can have "unreal" aspects to them. To lose hold of things is to lose a sense of being "here" (Ratcliff, 2008). This is not a discussion that enters into the realm of "mental health" or "psychosis" (although these could be included and are interesting and relevant to resistance work), but rather "everyday" talk of feelings includes communicating about a world that can be unfamiliar, familiar, intangible, unreal, safe, overwhelming, or one can feel connected or disconnected (Ratcliff, 2008).

Feelings are thus different than moods or emotions. Both moods and emotions are spoken of as often more subjective and transitory states (e.g. "I am in a bad mood" or "I was angry about that)." These are states that one experiences while already "in the

world," while taking for granted a type of shared "hold on things" or "reality" (Cvetkovitch, 2012; Damasio, 1994; Massumi, 2002; Probyn, 2005; Ratcliff, 2008). Take for example the following feelings: complete, flawed, diminished, unworthy, humble, separate, in limitation, at home, a fraud, slightly lost, overwhelmed, abandoned, stared at, torn, disconnected, invulnerable, or unloved. As you can see, these are not emotions, per se. We would not say, for example, "I have an alienated emotion" but rather "I feel alienated," or "that felt unreal" or "strange." In everyday language we use the phrase the "feeling of being…"; the "emotion of being..." definitely sounds peculiar. The "everyday" ways to describe an experience of our relationship with the world cannot be categorized as "emotions" or "emotional," and yet talking about affect as force or intensity is abstract unless it becomes "felt." Using metaphors to capture how one feels brings to light a sense of affect that makes it accessible in language, pointing to how the category of "feelings of being" may be an easier entry point into an exploration of "how does capitalism feel?", but also the affective dimension of alternatives to capitalism (Cvetkovitch, 2012; Stewart, 2007).

Thus, the term "feeling" encompasses a wide variety of experiences and a host of ways of relating to the world that are not captured by the terms emotion and affect. The dominant use of feeling is as a noun, as a way that we literally apprehend sensation on the body. We also have the definition of feeling as "intensity," the quality of affect that is translated through our proprioception, on occasion, into emotions or some kind of autobiographical experience (Damasio, 2003; Massumi, 2002). Finally, we have a more existential way of talking about feeling, according to Ratcliff, as a category that can capture ways of being in the world. The key here is that feelings of being are often a

"sense" of something that is existing beyond emotions and their corresponding scripts/formulas, yet still partly "embodied" and apprehended, making them less abstract than affects. Feelings of being, as a concept, might be a productive way into a discussion on what such feelings reveal about the way in which we are invested affectually and emotionally in the world around us.

Concluding Remarks

This chapter presented some of the past and current definitions of affect, emotion, and feeling found across the literature in the field of affect studies. I chose the literature for this chapter in order to present the most widely cited and influential authors writing in the field of affect, representative of the most dominant dialogues in the field, and juxtaposed these against more marginal authors who critique and distinguish themselves from the dominant works/models.

The distinctions between the three terms matter as they serve to theoretically separate what certain theorists writing in the post-structuralist tradition, such as Nigel Thrift, portray as representational versus non-representational theory (Thrift, 2004a). The collection of definitions of affect often resonate with each other in their attempts to capture something that seems to be uncapturable, and distinguish between affect and emotion along the lines of a biological and socio-political split. Affects are understood as non-representational or pre-cognitive and *not* subject dependent. Affect is trans-situational while emotion is contextual and situational (Anderson, 2006; Brennan, 2004; Massumi, 2002; Thrift, 2008). Emotion then is used to refer to a sociological, mostly

conscious expression of feelings (expressed in the symbolic/cultural realm of the "subjective").

Some of the key debates within the field of affect studies concern the psychologization of emotions, that is, whether emotions are seen as quantifiable and universalizable (Anderson, 2006; Berlant, 2011; Brennan, 2004; Massumi, 2002; Probyn, 2005; Terada, 2001; Thrift, 2008). As I mentioned previously, the ontological differences seen in varying definitions have direct epistemological consequences with regard to what is taken up as the "objects" of social inquiry by different theorists. I argue in this dissertation that the assemblage of emotions, affect, feeling (EAF) is weighted towards a dominant discourse that informs how we emote in the West and the ontology that informs the collection of these discourses is psychologizing and essentialist.

Feelings are a category with less clear consensus. "Feeling" is often employed in everyday usage as a subjective and biographical way of apprehending experience, but feelings are also used more abstractly to describe ways of being that capture something that the categories of affect and emotion do not, that is, our experience of being in the world from a more phenomenological perspective. In a way, the category of feeling can give us a language on how it feels to be affected (Ahmed, 2004b, Berlant, 2011; Cvetkovitch, 2012; Ratcliff, 2008; Stewart, 2007).[22]

Despite the ongoing debates on different components of affective theory (e.g. the decentred subject, the notion of affect as a "force," or the universality of emotion), there

[22] For example, Anne Cvetkovitch, in her "public feelings project," says that imperative questions such as "how do I feel?" and "how does capitalism feel?" are starting points for something that might be a theory but could also be a description, an investigation, or a process that helps us to view feelings of those resisting as not only shared, but underpinning power structures (Cvetkovitch, 2012).

are several thinkers in the field of affect that opt to abandon particularities of definition for a focus on how feelings, emotions, and affect are experienced and where agency can be found in these experiences (Ahmed, 2004a, 2010; Berlant; 2011; Cvetkovitch, 2012). Although I resonate with the literature that is not overly concerned with tidy definitions of affect, emotions, and feelings (for example, in the case of Ahmed, she uses the categories of feelings, affects, and emotions synonymously), I take the position that it would be a mistake to *not* recognize the limiting and disciplinary effects of emotions, reflected through what might be termed the trap of a "personal politics of emotions" in western autonomy-oriented organizing. In other words, I think that distinctions *do* matter because the requirement for "the emotional" to have a "centered subject" means that relations play out in a way that affectually inclines us towards a sense of "self" that is productive of capital. Slyvia Wynter's work, for example, points out how personal and emotional ways of articulating our "selves" are often productive of capital's determinations and emotional regulation is inextricably linked to projects of colonialism and neoliberal discourses of governmentality (Wynter, 2015). I am suggesting that emotions, affect, and feeling form an affectual assemblage that in the West is dominated by the category of emotions. The EAF assemblage means that each of these categories relates to the other in a non-deterministic way. However, the hegemony of "emotional life" as an experience of "self" generates affects that are productive of capitalism (and identity politics) and intensify the essentialized and emotionally regulated subject, that tends towards a good subject of capitalism (or liberal *monohumanism's homo oeconomicus* as Wynter's work points out and I expand on below).

My work aims to illustrate that destabilizing the hegemony of the essentialized "self" and how it relates to "emotions" would require deconstructing and challenging the "psychologized" models of emotions and the relationship between these models and broader apparatuses of power. In other words, destabilizing this dominance would require a shift from the command that emotions have on our discursive sense of "self" in the EAF assemblage. In this regard, western autonomy-oriented praxis would recognize the realm of the emotional in the West as essentialist, as a site of resistance, and be inclined to move towards an "elsewhere" relationality- shifting towards a politics of affects (Ahmed, 2004b, 2010; Brennan, 2011; Cvetkovitch, 2003, 2012, Massumi, 2015; Probyn, 2005; Stewart, 2007). I return to the words of Ahmed throughout this project, that "our emotions are bound up with the securing of social hierarchy", thus examining our emotions is a site of radical resistance is to destabilize and refuse to accept the social hierarchy as inevitable (Ahmed, 2004b: 4)

Before moving to a discussion on how this might be possible, my objective in the next two chapters (3 and 4) is to give an overview of the work on affect/feeling/emotions within the context of mainstream social movement theory, then specifically autonomy-oriented movements in order to see how emotions/affect/feeling are articulated both in the theory and the practice of western autonomy-oriented "activists". I position my own work amongst those scholars (mostly feminist, queer, and anti-racist) writing about "everyday" expressions of affects, for "their significance lies in the intensities they build and in what thoughts and feelings they make possible" (Stewart, 2007: 15).

Chapter 3:

Affect and Emotion in Mainstream Social Movement Theory

Part 1: The western psychologized approach to emotions

The last chapter served to compare and contrast notions of emotions, affect, and feeling while highlighting the hegemonic discourse of psychologizing emotions. This chapter begins by more fully exploring the effects of the dominant discourse[23] on emotions in the western context I am investigating, the connection between our emotions and our subjectivity, and how these discourses have colonized so much of mainstream social life. I look more closely at how psychologizing emotions greatly shape how dominant culture understands emotions (i.e., as manageable, as dichotomized (good vs. bad emotions), and as bound up with and contained within an essentialized subject). I explore how the assumptions that underwrite the ontology of emotions and its related, "psychologizing" discourses are founded on a biologically "centered" self (or, biocentric self, in Sylvia Wynter's (2015) terms).

The assumptions that underwrite the ontology of emotions inform the self-help market and its corresponding therapeutic models, specifically "positive psychology" (i.e., how to be happy). My intention is to show how these dominant discourses around "emotional well-being" are inextricably linked to colonial histories informed by discourses of humanism. These discourses are affective processes shaping the relations of capital which require emotionally regulated/invested subjects to continually intensify its

[23] This refers to the psychologised ontology of emotions which is the prevailing way that emotions are understood in the West.

functioning (Massumi, 2015; Wynter, 2015).

In the subsequent section, I examine the role of emotions in social movement theory in order to highlight how the dominant discourses of psychologizing emotions are at work in many attempts to understand movements (in both descriptions and theories of movements) as well as in the movements themselves.

The Western Psychologized Approach to Emotions: Psy Discourses, Self-Help, and Positive Psychology

From a Foucauldian perspective "psy" discourses are expert knowledge claims aimed at social control and the creation of the regulated self. The notion of "ideal" mental health (and emotional stability), and that this ideal state can be achieved "with the right intervention," is problematic. The discourse of "ideal mental/emotional health" gets broken down into "positives" and "negatives", that is, what is a "good" or "productive" emotion and what isn't. These are conceptualized against the norm—the happy, productive, emotionally regulated, rational, neoliberal citizen- positive psychology is one of the most popular therapeutic discourses in the West and is informed by these conceptualizations (Ahmed, 2004b, 2010; Foucault, 2010).

One of the leading practitioners in the field of positive psychology, Martin Seligman, defines it as "using your signature strengths every day to produce authentic happiness and abundant gratification" (Seligman, 2004: 20). Practitioners of positive psychology offer interventions that they claim will help individuals in their pursuit of the "good life" (Ahmed, 2010). Of course, "the good life," a key slogan of positive psychology, and is derived from specific assumptions about what holds the greatest value

in life.[24] Positive psychology purports to offer a scientific understanding of emotions, which not surprisingly, relies heavily on the ontology of psychologizing emotions (see chapter 2). It propagates and builds on models of emotions like PONS, EI, The Colour Wheel, and reflexivity[25], but the emphasis is on how to use this information in comprehensive therapeutic programmes in order to maximize values, strengths, virtues, and talents (Seligman, 2009).

Positive psychology and its many therapeutic variations fall under the umbrella term "self-help" discourses. These discourses, by offering diagnoses on what causes emotional unrest, and offering advice on how to return to a healthy and whole self, offer

[24] There is in self-help discourses a fundamental belief in the notion that emotional health is the responsibility of the individual subject, that the subject *is* an "individual", separate and autonomous from others (centered subjectivity), who can become "happy" if they follow the prescriptions for its achievement (Ahmed, 2010). "The good life" fantasy is offered up—symbolic and material wealth accumulation, as well as the achievement of markers of successful "selfhood"—which are merely the capitalist values in the guise of personal values (Ahmed, 2010). These values/factors are found through engagement with "normal" and "happy objects" such as heterosexuality, the nuclear family, the good job, and an increase of private wealth/property (Ahmed, 2010). Thus achieving happiness in these discourses is inseparable from capitalism and immersed in the rhetoric of "freedom" (2010) and the associations of the term freedom under modern capitalism is inextricably tied to a very particular type of life that has specific values, such as leisure time, accumulation of wealth, whiteness, marriage, etc. (Ahmed, 2010). Ahmed's argument is that both happiness and freedom are associated with some life choices and not others, and happiness, in her definition, "follows being a certain kind of being" and certain associations to things, both material and non, that have grounded the discourses of neoliberal capitalism (Ahmed, 2010: 20). Capitalism promises to enhance well-being in the aggregate by aligning product and service providers with the logic of the unfettered market. But if subjects under capitalism don't believe in their individual responsibility, liability, contained subjectivity, the nuclear family, or the relationship between happiness and wealth or family values, the effects would be dire for the ongoing underwriting of "the good life" fantasy and the project of empire (Ahmed, 2010; Illouz, 2009). In short, the rhetoric that accompanies neoliberal capitalism is the same rhetoric found in these dominant discourses around *emotional* life; we have the right to be happy; we are required to take responsibility for participating in the search for the good life; achievement of the good life is measured in how emotionally fulfilled we are, which in turn is directly related to whether we have achieved the benchmarks of popularized notions of happiness (marriage, family, job, property). There is great pressure to conform to these rights, as they permeate and inform the discourses of capital, and they are inextricably linked to *how we feel.*

[25] The comprehensive description of these "models" for understanding emotion can be found in chapter 1. To refresh: Plutchik's Colour Wheel was used to name and express complex/mixed emotions; PONS is the Profile of Non Verbal Sensitivity (women scored higher than men in reading "non-verbal" emotions; reflexivity is the practice of becoming aware of, and gaining control of the sensations, articulations, and presentations of personal emotions; EI is "emotional intelligence" which is the ability to recognize one's own and other people's emotions and to use this information to guide behaviour and thinking.

instruction in emotional regulation. A large for-profit industry has developed from self-help discourses, and this has worked to spread and normalize their assumptions regarding emotions and emotional health. The self-help industry at the start of the 21st century is a market that includes "books, seminars, audio and video products and personal coaching" constituting $2.48 billion (USD) per year in the United States alone (McGee, 2005: 188). By 2006, the "self-improvement" market in the U.S. was worth more than $9 billion and included infomercials, mail-order catalogues, holistic institutes, books, audio cassettes, motivation-seeker seminars, the personal coaching market, and weight-loss and stress management programs; in 2013, the industry grossed over $12 billion (McGee, 2005).

Self-help discourses have become entrenched in the private sphere as individuals seek them out to manage emotional difficulties in their personal lives, but they have also spread into public life. Increasingly, employers across different sectors are including "emotional development" in employee benefit plans. Many companies hold group-awareness trainings and have workshops that involve emotional intelligence and psychotherapy, all of which feature the philosophy of "positive psychology" (Ahmed, 2010). These offer more-or-less pre-packaged solutions to instruct people on how to appropriately conduct their emotional betterment.

The literature of self-help directs the "seeker" to various products which offer familiar frameworks, all signifying happiness. To describe the trend, McGee uses Gabriel Tarde's comments on "standardization" of cultural norms, whose purpose is to "nationalize more and more and even to internationalize the public mind…. The conversations of individuals are forced to follow the groove of their borrowed thoughts. One pen suffices to set off a million tongues" (Tarde as cited in McGee 2005: 162).

McGee is pointing to a cultural imperialism; I would suggest that in affective terms he is saying that standardization works on an emotional level. Through our embodied investment, our *emotional* or *lived* experience with these discourses (as figures who emote in increasingly predictable and particular ways), we continuously produce the affective relations necessary for capital (McGee, 2005). For example, Brian Massumi speaks of the mechanisms of control that involve all aspects of our lives when we are "employed". This involves the shaping of our everyday schedules, how we dress and act, but also the fact that the precarity of the market requires us to worry about having, getting, and keeping a job, but also makes us think about how marketable we can be. Massumi says "so your free time starts getting taken up by self-improvement or taking care of yourself so that you remain healthy and alert and can perform at your peak. The difference between your job life and off-job life collapses, there are no longer distinctions between your public and private functions" (2015, 38). Another way of saying this is that our lives are formed around capital production. Massumi says that Marx

> "does not just say that the capitalist identifies with the capitalist structure of society, and that the worker becomes affectively invested in it. He says that the capitalist *personifies* the capitalist relation's power to produce, and to appropriate productive forces ever more extensively, and ever more intensely. The worker personifies the potential for the capitalist relation to continue to appropriate productive forces as it proliferates and intensifies its operations- but also the potential that its operation hit a wall (of fatigue, of sabotage, of resistance). In other words, worker and capitalist are *figures* of capital. They index its constitutive tensions and tendencies. They are products of its process that figure the relational dynamic of its operations. These processual figures can then be fed back into the process to generate second-order effects (effects of processual self-reference)" (Massumi, 2015: 89).

Thus, we produce the affective relations necessary for capitalism because we are figures in the process of capitalism, literally, these processes in-form us[26]. The weight the dominant ontology of emotions has in these processes is significant.

In the case of self-help, the formulaic models and methods promoted by the self-help industry that are used to identify, classify, and group what is emotional encourages consumers to be productive of hyper-individuality and take responsibility for their own care of self. To hearken back to Foucault, he uses "care of the self" or "arts of existence" to mean "those reflective and voluntary practices by which men not only set themselves rules of conduct but seek to transform themselves to change themselves isn't their singular being, and to make of their life into an *oeuvre* that carries certain aesthetic values and meets certain stylistic criteria" (Foucault, 1986: 10-11). For Foucault, however, this would mean evaluating and being critical of the dominant discourse on emotions and its disciplinary affects, and Foucault's disdain for what falls under the umbrella of "self-care" is clear in the following quote:

> "In any case, what I would like to point out to you is that all the same when one sees the meaning, or rather the total absence of meaning , that is given to very familiar expressions which crop up everywhere in our discourse, such as rediscovering oneself, freeing oneself, being oneself, being authentic etc.; when one sees the absence of meaning and of thought contained in each of these

[26] The power of capitalism is that it literally forms us. According to Massumi, one level that the power of capital acts on is on our identity. It produces us. It in-forms us. Power is distributed through affects that "comes up in the field of potential", which is a part of our formation (Massumi, 2015:19). As we emerge subjectively as "individuals", we actualize the qualities and regularities needed to *be* productive of capitalism.

> expressions used today, I don't think there is much to be proud of in the efforts that we are making at present to reconstitute an ethics of the self" (Foucault, 2001: 241).

Thus, the self- help industry propagates this "meaninglessness" of self improvement, packaged as an ethical imperative of fulfilment and responsibility if we are to be productive members of society (always under *such and such constraints* that shore up both liberal and capitals imperatives*)*. Moreover, the measures of "health" promoted by this industry assume a "neutral" or "normal" state, against which deviances are measured. As we will see in Chapter 4 below, my results show that even the activists I interviewed were preoccupied with "self-care"; in these communities that are still dominated by the western ontology of emotions, they did not consider the idea that emotional well-being should be a communal responsibility, or that the notion of "emotional well-being" itself is a disciplinary function of capital. We tend to view ourselves as individually responsible for articulating and managing "personal" emotions gauged against a view of health and well-being that is prescribed to us by "expert" knowledge claims (Ahmed, 2010; Cvetkovitch, 2003, 2012). In short, these interrelated markets/discourses are all informed by an ontology of the centered self, and shape the dominant understanding of our subjectivity in the most intimate ways both within and without the social movement communities I examined.[27]

[27] I am referring to both white and non white settlers that have been/are engaged in autonomy-oriented organizing in Kingston, Ontario.

Emotional Regulation

Productivity and responsibility are key disciplinary tools that engage and invest "the self" in therapeutic discourses (neoliberal discourses of governmentality).[28] For example, popular guidelines are given in most corporate workplaces that are drawn from "psy" discourses which help to define when and how to share emotions effectively (Ahmed, 2010). In these instances, there is a focus on the importance and responsibility of being a "good employee," as well as the importance of being an "emotionally balanced" person, one who practices self-awareness (e.g., emotional reflexivity or EI). Likewise, there is emphasis placed in these discourses on using the right language to express emotions appropriately and the appropriate emotions (e.g., the colour wheel, PONS, reflexivity, let's talk etc.). But in the end, emotions are *yours* or *mine*, and taking responsibility for them is key; debilitative emotions are "negative" and caused by "irrationality" and therefore inhibit "productivity," while other emotions are facilitative to personal and social "productivity" and therefore "positive" and inclined towards emotional health (Ahmed, 2010).

These discourses employ the same rhetoric of capitalism: efficiency, rationality, individuality, responsibility, and desiring for the ever-elusive (and illusory) "happiness" that is found when one is living the "good life" (Ahmed, 2010; Berlant, 2011). Thus, the dominant culture around emotions in the West, our most intimate and personal emotions,

[28] Governmentality refers to the ways in which a population is "governed" through the way that people are taught to govern themselves, through processes that shift power from a central authority, like the state, by dispersing it productively through the population. It is therefore a way of understanding how "conduct" is shaped, through the embodied experience and the shaping of productive capacities of bodies in the populace. Both "responsibility" and "individuality" are important categories that contribute to the way that governmentality shapes the desire/impulses to govern our own bodies and health and well-being. The dominant way that we are socialized into relating (apprehending, treating, articulating) to "our" emotions is a part of neoliberal governmentality (Foucault, 2001).

those that inform and produce our "sense" of subjectivity, as well as the dominant therapeutic models used to "deal" with emotions—in sum, the "common sense" of emotions—creates patterns and tendencies of emotions that are a product of and thus *reflect* and *repeat* "capitalist" values. Again, this shows the need for capital to have quite a particular "figure" that is emotionally invested in specific discourses, one that is fully invested in a sense of individuality (i.e., the autonomous subject), and emotes and invests and believes in an essential "self". For Ahmed (2010), building structures and processes on these assumptions will have pacifying and destructive effects on politics of anti-oppression.

There is a tension worth noting between the notion that capitalist values have infiltrated our more intimate and personal emotions and the notion that emotions are transpersonal and a collective responsibility that transcends capital's determinations (or have the potential to). This is where affect, as a concept of relation and process, is crucial to understanding how we might find spaces for resistance beyond these emotional determinations, something I explore at the conclusion of the dissertation (Massumi, 2015).

Colonial Histories and the Emotional Self

The essential notion of self has been shaped by a history of European colonialism[29], wherein racialized emotional regulation was an important component of

[29] Sylvia Wynter has examined how Renaissance discourses on "humanism" are based on a white male bourgeois subject from which scientific discourses of the "other" have emerged, and these humanist

empire building (Wynter, 2015). The European colonial project was one where "the processes of capital domination conditioned the subject's views on bodies and ways of feeling and expressing" (Nievas in Mohanty, 2003:60). This colonial epistemology works towards generating obedient subjects by violently creating and recreating very specific world images and eliminating the diversity of ways of existing (Illouz, 1997, 2007). According to Sylvia Wynter, colonial history interrelates with our current intimate relationalities. She theorizes that the current subject of neoliberalism has extended through history based on two figures: Man1 and Man2 (Wynter, 2015). She says that the figure of Man is the "measuring stick through which all other forms of being are measured," producing racial violence as "commonsense" (Wynter, 2015). Wynter's work compares the figure of Man1—the Renaissance's apprehension of "human" as tethered to the theological order of knowledge of pre-Renaissance Latin-Christian medieval Europe—to Man2—the Western Bourgeoisie's model of being human that has "been articulated as, since the latter half of the nineteenth century, liberal *monohumanism's homo oeconomicus*" (Wynter, 2015). She argues that both Man1 and Man2 are inflected by powerful knowledge systems and origin stories that explain who/what we are:

> These systems and stories produce the lives and racialized categories of the rational and irrational, the selected and dysselected, the haves and the have-nots as asymmetrical naturalized racial–sexual human groupings that are specific to time, place, and personhood yet signal the processes through which the empirical

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discourses are the ones that ground the ontology of emotions (the contained self that has essential qualities that differ depending on race, ethnicity, etc.) (Wynter, 2015).

> and experiential lives of *all* humans are increasingly subordinated to a figure that thrives on accumulation. (Wynter, 2015:10)

Wynter contends that we have *neurological* responses to what these figures induce. We invest in origin stories and locate our "humanness" in these permeating knowledge systems, the post-biblical stories she refers to as "macro-origin" stories, that are "tightly knitted" to Man1 and Man2, and she argues that these function to "semantically activate the endogenous opiate reward-and-punishment system of the human brain" (of which the category of "race" serves as a naturalizing and secular organizing principal of global relations) (Wynter, 2015:10). Worth quoting at length, she argues

> We presently live in a moment where the human is understood as a purely biological mechanism that is subordinated to a teleological economic script that governs our global well-being/ill-being—a script, therefore, whose macro-origin story calcifies the hero figure of *homo oeconomicus*, who practices, indeed normalizes, accumulation in the name of (economic) freedom. Capital is thus projected as the indispensable, empirical, and metaphysical source of all human life, thus semantically activating the neurochemistry of our brain's opiate reward/punishment system to act accordingly! (Wynter, 2015: 10)

According to Wynter, the ontology of our *mythoi* is biocentric; we invent ourselves as being purely biological. The consequence of a biocentric ontology and its overrepresented macro-origin stories is that the stakes of human freedom are normalized through "survival-through-ever-increasingly-processes-of-consumption-and-accumulation" and its related disciplinary discourses (Wynter, 2015, 11). The once

overtly imperial and colonial monohumanist[30] premises that legitimated capital and colonial pursuits have been reincorporated in the Western world system; though this system is post-colonial and post-apartheid, it is *still liberal* (or neoliberal). It is a "monohumanist symbolically encoded configuration" that requires, in the words of Ahmed, ongoing "world making" by subjects who serve its determinations.

Wynter's work is fascinating for me as it points to both how we constantly (re)produce identity categories that strengthen "difference," at the same time as (re)produce "sameness" through the dominant ontology of a centered self, both of which secure liberal "monohumanism" (Wynter, 2015). Likewise, we experience life and invest in it from a biocentric ontology, aiding the determination of a "survival of the fittest" mythoi (Wynter, 2015). The dominant ontology of emotions is wrapped into these histories and serves to aid in intensifying these determinations (Ahmed, 2004a, 2004b: 2010; Stewart, 2007; Wynter, 2015). The ongoing colonial project is a part of the process of capitalism, narrowing what is experientially possible from an emotional standpoint, and encouraging relationships that limit the possibility of different conditions of being[31] (Illouz, 1997, 2007). The psychologizing discourses of self-help and positive psychology are related to this project as they are grounded in the dominant ontology of emotions and its required essential subject. My argument is that the relations of capital require investment from emotionally regulated subjects that are invested in individualism and

[30] Monohumanism means only one human. This refers to the way that the formation of the western understanding of "human" is a universalized and singular figure that is based on the white male bourgeois subject.

[31] The residential school system in Canada is an example of colonial, genocidal and assimilationist strategies of limiting, altering, or the overall 'shaping' of *being*, which is arguably a project that worked (works), inter alia, on the *affective* dimensions of being.

therefore more easily tending to incline towards capitalist developments, and according to Wynter, biocentrically inclined to be so. Or, in the words of Ahmed, "the late 20th century preoccupation with the 'self' serves as a tool of social control: soothing political unrest…[for] one's own pursuit of self-invention" (2010: 23).

Moreover, a consequence of the western "common sense", psychologizing perspective on emotions is that it confines definitions of emotions within a social-psychological positivist category that generally relies on un-deconstructed standards of "normal" and "neutral" by which to evaluate well-being more generally. In fact, both "negative" and "positive" emotions are reified as treatable and preventable states that exist outside of larger political and social considerations, something that Foucault (and others) referred to as "technologies of the self" (Foucault, 1975). Viewing "common sense" ways of dealing with emotions as "technologies of the self" is interesting to me because it means the "self" is within our grasp to destabilize—we have access to "self" and we can examine how our capacities to act, in the words of Spinoza, are affected by the dominant ontology of emotions. We can affect the relations, processes, and discourses of capital by playing with our *emotional lives* since both our understanding of "self" as well as "emotions" are dominated by discourses productive of processes of capitalism and colonialism. We live out tendencies that strengthen these oppressive processes, but, as I explore in the final chapter, there is hope in creating new movements and new tendencies in a shift from emotions to affect (Massumi, 2015).

This section was intended to broaden an understanding of how the psychologizing of emotions, the dominant discourse I highlighted in Chapter 2, impacts much of mainstream social life and relates to current, popular discourses on "emotional well-

being" as well as to colonial histories that have formed identity categories of "self" and "other" (Wynter, 2015). My work examines the extent to which the autonomy-oriented activists and the communities they participated in, based in Ontario, Canada, have achieved or experienced autonomy from the limiting aspects of these dominant discourses in the way they deal with emotions through organizing. Before exploring where emotions are found in autonomous social movement theory and practice, I explore where emotions have been written about in more mainstream social movement theory in order to highlight how these dominant discourses live in many attempts to understand movements.

Part 2: Emotions in Social Movements Theory

Early Social Movement Theory

This section provides a broad overview of mainstream social movements and how they have been theorized in the academy before proceeding to a more in-depth description of where affect and emotions figure in social movement theory. This is followed by a specific focus on the role of affect in autonomy-oriented social movement theory.

Social scientists have advanced theories to explain why people protest since at least the 18th century (Klandermans, 1997). "The classical paradigm" was developed based on observations of protests in France in the 1890s, protests that were regarded as irrational and emotional, the product of unconventional behaviours. Such "outbursts" were believed to reflect periods of anarchy and transition due to shifting religious, political, and social conditions (Klandermans, 1997). The classical paradigm was generally concerned with "contentious politics" and included breakdown theories, collective behaviour theory, mass society theory, and relative deprivation theory. These theories understood protest as the manifestation of "extreme" behaviours culminating in panics, mobs, crowds, mass hysteria. Such behaviours were born of "some form of structural strain such as industrialization, urbanization, unemployment [which] produced a subjective tension and psychological disposition" (Smelser, 1962:76). According to the classical paradigm, in order to escape from these tensions, people acted out in spontaneous, impatient, irrational, expressive, and violent ways (Smelser, 1962).

The classical paradigm was the dominant lens used to analyze and explain protest until after the second World War (Ayers, 2003). In the post-war period in North America

and Europe, protests came to be viewed as mobilizations of "popular sector power" seeking to gain voice at a national level (Ayers, 2003; Kreiger, 2002). In academia, movements were viewed from emerging perspectives such as resource mobilization theory or political process approach[32]**,** wherein people were viewed as discontented but rational, working within the perceived legitimacy of existing political decision-making structures in order to bring about change (Ayers, 2003). This shift in how movements were viewed did not completely jettison the influence of the classical paradigm, however. Most post-war movements were understood as being formed around a foundational assumption: the state is an agent of positive social change, one that could be responsive to the needs of common people via the "democratic system." In turn, common people were understood as rational. Those movements that protested against the state or capital, and took action outside of existing political channels, were still considered irrational and emotional (Haddow, 2002; Klandermans, 1997).

The incredible proliferation of movements in the 1960s cast doubt on the efficacy of the classical theoretical perspectives of contentious politics and ushered in the term "new social movements" (NSM) as a way to describe these emergent struggles (Haddow, 2002). The classical paradigm's emphasis on "irrationality" clearly could not adequately explain the fact that many of these movements had concrete goals, clearly articulated general values and interests, and enacted strategies through rational calculation (Klandermans, 1997). Another reason these movements defied the classical theories was that the new movements, in contrast to previous protests associated with industrialization,

[32] Resource mobilization literally means the ability for a movement to mobilize/acquire their own resources and orient/mobilize people towards achieving the movement's objectives (Haddow, 2002). Political process theory is similar but focuses on "opportunity," that is, different components of social structure will affect the opportunities afforded to a movement and thus impact its strength and formation (Ayers, 2003).

urbanization, and unemployment, were occurring in a context of (seemingly) growing rather than declining welfare (Klandermans, 1997). Thus, the shift between "old" to "new" movements was theorized in the context of the changes in the political economy of the postwar period and then further proliferating due to increasingly unequal distribution of wealth and power as a result of neoliberal restructuring in the late 1970s (Ponniah et al., 2001). The new theoretical approaches are generally categorized as "structural" (e.g. resource mobilization and political process) or "social constructivist." These latter approaches tend to offer cultural models of movements focusing, for example, on how people perceive and interpret aspects of resistance using concepts such as "frames," "identities," and "narratives" in order to deepen understandings of what motivates people to resist (Goodwin et al. 2006, Jasper, 1998).

Understanding "New Social Movements"

Ponniah and Rebick argue that the proliferation of social movements erupting in the 1960s up to present day have been reflective of a mass upheaval of structure. Unlike early social movement theorists, they argue that movements are rational reactions to structural transformation (2001). This restructuring has resulted in decreased participation in formal channels of political engagement and declined respect for the state and its political processes (Ponniah et al., 2001; Brody, 2002; Laxer, 2000). Increasing disparity in distribution of wealth and power has resulted in a widespread loss of faith in the idea that the government can act as an agent of social change (Haddow, 2002). Ponniah and Rebick contend that the result has been a crisis of democracy (2001). The student movement, the civil rights movement, the women's movement, the environmental

movement, and the anti-war movement all reflect clear disillusionment with existing political processes.

Some theorists explain these political responses as proportional to political economic processes collectively referred to as the "hollowing out" of the state (Douglas, 2000), or what Jones Finer calls "the geographical restructuring of responsibility for social policy" (1999: 31). These phrases refer to the privatization, deregulation, and corporatization of once government/publicly controlled space, a restructuring of the political capabilities of both the individual and the state (Cerny, 2002: 197). For movements, "hollowing out" means the state shifted away from the position of having jurisdiction[33] over domestic policy. Consequently, the tools or tactics that are available to the challengers of a given structure or policy—their "repertoire" of resistance strategies—have also changed (Ayer, 2003; Douglas, 2000; Jones Finer, 1999; Krieger, 2002). Thus, two key features of NSMs were that they worked transnationally because of the hollowing out of the state, the increased mobility of capital, and ease of global communications made possible by new technologies, and they demanded and fought for change to the dominant order that was appearing under global capital.

More recently, attempts have been made to theorize the "newest" social movements by analyzing new currents of struggle and protest emerging in the late Twentieth and early Twenty-First centuries (Day, 2004; 2005; Graeber, 2004). According to Day, the "newest" social movements are those that are (generally) resisting hegemony in all its

[33] Such jurisdictional transformations are seen in the formation of the European Union (EU) and the increased power of institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, and World Trade Organization WTO), or the scope and reach of trade agreements like North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

forms by engaging in a politics of the "act" rather than a politics of "demand"[34] (2004: 70). Theoretically, Day focuses on broader fields of social change and theoretical-philosophical analyses "that attempt to assess the viability of different *logics of struggle* in particular socio-historical circumstances"[35] (Day, 2005: 71). He argues that the "newest" movements do not focus on strategies that see social change emerging from existing institutions, state or otherwise. Neither do these movements seek to establish a singular sense of collective identity, nor do they adopt of specific practices or tactics of resistance that conform to pre-existing ideological traditions. Instead, the movements are theorized from a perspective that aims to "destabilize the hegemony of hegemony[36]**,** by exploring the possibilities of non-hegemonic forms of radical social change" (Day, 2005: 71).

The role of emotions in the old, new, and newest movements generally receives the most attention in cultural approaches to social movements and the focus here tends to be

[34] The "act" is a process of resistance, something that in its manifestation/process of "doing" destabilizes and subverts, without the need to achieve measurable outcomes. These communities tend to be less interested in change, reform, or replacement of the dominant order than creating "non-hegemonic alternatives to the societies out of which they emerge" (Day, 2005: 73).

[35] "Logic of struggle" is way of describing the practices that influence a particular, often anarchist inspired, mode of resistance. I use "logic of struggle" to refer to implicit regularities or tendencies in thinking and action that are visible within and across social movements. These logics are expressions of continually shifting and often implicit values, principles, and assumptions, as well as theories and methods of understanding social relations. In turn, logics shape the tactics groups deploy, the goals they desire, the sites and targets of intervention they choose, the justifications for their actions, and the decisions regarding which people are included in the "we" that acts. To be sure, logics of struggle and of domination are always "impure", always in contact with and "contaminated" by other logics of struggle and domination. Thus, I am not suggesting that any movement or struggle acts according to a single logic or that we can understand society as constituted by a fundamental antagonism against which all struggle is ultimately directed. Rather, there are always multiple logics at work in processes of struggle, and indeed in the constitution of relations of domination (Uzelman, 2008: 322).

[36] According to Day, this is defined as "the commonsensical assumption that meaningful social change—and social order itself—can only be achieved through the deployment of universalizing hierarchical forms, epitomized by the nation-state, but including conceptions of the world-state as well." He argues that evidence of challenges to these assumptions is found in contemporary activism as well as affinity-based direct action (Day, 2005: 72).

on more mainstream movements of protest and demand. There is a stream of theory that views emotions as being central to the politics of protest and makes them the main focus for sociological analysis. I review the most widely cited research in this subfield before summarizing the dominant typology of emotions, which is ubiquitous across this literature (Adams, 2003; Calhoun, 2001; Goodwin et al., 2006; Jasper, 1997; 1998).

Emotions in Social Movement Theory

In this section I begin with an overview of the impact feminist work has had on emotions in mainstream social movement theory.[37] Feminist critique of the assumed binary between emotions and reason has led to an acknowledgment across the literature on social movements that emotions play an important role in the politics of protest.

Feminist writers across academic disciplines, from geography to the biological sciences, have advanced a broad critique of excessive rationalism in western thought. They have highlighted the way emotions have been ignored, denied, and denigrated in social and political life. Feminists have argued that the common dichotomies in Western thought—mind vs. body, thinking vs. feelings, public vs. private—marginalized women. These critics argued that emotions need to be a central part of social inquiry (Calhoun, 2001; Davidson et al. 2004; Gorton, 2007; Henderson, 2008; Hooks, 1985; Jaggar, 1985,

[37] When I refer to mainstream social movement theory I am referring to the "empirically" based theory that developed in the context of the post-war reform movements of the U.S. and Western Europe. These movements provided the foundation for theories that have been continually modified since then (the shift from post-war movements to resource mobilization, process theories, cultural theories, etc. briefly sketched in the introduction to Chapter 3). Mainstream movement theory has built on these theories, modified them and continued to draw from them.

1997; Kim, 2002; Mohanty, 2003; Nagel, 1997; Reger, 2004; Sharp, 2009; Srivastava, 2006).

While the feminist wave across disciplines has challenged gendered norms associated with "feminine," in social movement studies some critics focused specifically on anger suppression (Henderson, 2008; Holmes, 2004; Jaggar, 1997; Kim, 2002; Srivastava, 2006; Taylor, 1995). Well-known work on emotions contributed to sexist notions that women are weaker and more passive (Jaggar, 1997). For example, Paul Ekman and his colleagues (1972, 1983, 1994) presented research findings that suggested women are more likely to suppress anger, whereas men are more likely to mask fear. Moreover, they also noted that anger is usually aimed downward in hierarchies. This research helped to reinforce stereotypes that women are too "weak" or too "passive" to express "negative" emotions. Feminist critics of "natural" differences between sexes contend that expressing anger is a means for challenging injustices and is a normal part of most protest movements regardless of sex. Feminists criticized that this type of research feeds into existing notions that "passion and reason not only dichotomizes thought and feeling but also elevates 'abstract masculinity' over women's standpoint" (Oliver, et al: 2003: 233). In response to these and other ongoing "proofs," feminists engaged in protest as a means of challenging these stereotypes, believing that anger created impressions of power that aided in asserting individual and collective rights. The emotional "impressions" that feminists offered in protest contributed to the "self-help" movement, something that Taylor called the "taproot of feminism" (1996: 175). Taylor argued that women's self-help plays a major role in challenging the gender norms surrounding love and anger. Taylor also contended that the self-help model led to a historical shift in

American society toward free expression, individualism, and self-development (1996:175). According to this argument, the ability to feel and display the emotions associated with political agency—anger, indignation, pride, etc.—represent a kind of "emotional liberation" (Eyerman, 2005) every bit as necessary as "cognitive liberations" (Aminzade et al., 2001). In short, making emotional displays less gendered has been one of the central goals of the women's movement.

Other work in solidarity with feminism emphasizes the importance of *particular* emotions in motivating us towards certain "goals" (Britt, et al., 2000). Shame for example, has been highlighted as fuel for transforming humiliation or denigration into new conditions of pride (Britt et al. 2000). Gay pride movements are exemplary of this kind of struggle. But research on pride movements also reveals the strategic dilemmas faced by stigmatized groups confronting shame. While they are trying to fight the stereotypes or categories that shame them, they are also trying to hold on to their identity. According to Jasper, emotional "liberation" therefore involves the transformation of shame into pride in one's (always contested) group identity (Polletta et al., 2001).

Other feminist work was offered in response to theories of "feeling rules"— the study of emotional expression being managed depending on cultural expectation. This research examined the link between status and power, and took the management of emotions as a central focus while addressing uneven power relations within interpersonal relationships (Collins, 1990; Holmes, 2004; Hoschschild, 1983; Kemper, 1987, 2001; Srivastava, 2006). Feminist writing on emotions in social movements was further advanced by queer theorists addressing sex and sexuality, work on HIV/AIDS, and analysis of the emotional culture of protest groups on the margins (Ahmed, 2004a, 2004b;

Aminzade et al, 2001; Bartky, 1997; Berlant, 1997; Brennan, 2004; Brown, 2007; Butler, 1993, 1997; Cvetkovitch, 2003, 2012; Srivastava, 2006). Many of these movements aimed to transform "feeling rules" as part of struggles against multiple forms of domination.

A subsection of the feminist-driven literature on social movements remained focused on challenging the dominant notion that emotions are "irrational" but also offered insight on the different ways that emotions can be seen as "evaluative" in social movements (Nussbaum, 2001). Representative of this stream is Nussbaum who argues that "emotions always involve thought of an object combined with thought of the object's salience or importance; in that sense, they always involve appraisal or evaluation [that is] important to the person's own flourishing" (2001:23). For Nussbaum emotions are a form of information processing that operate faster than our conscious minds, helping us to negotiate the world around us and "mobilize" us to reach to attain goals (2001: 30). What Nussbaum puts forth is an inextricable view of thought, feeling, and action; they are all imperative to social action/resistance.

Dominant Typology of Emotions in Social Movement Studies

Within social movement theory that highlights the role of emotions, there is a generally agreed upon "typology" of how they work in social movements. This typology tells us what emotions do, the impact they have on resistance, and how they are used. The typology is drawn from dominant conceptualizations of emotions in the biological sciences outlined in the previous chapter (Ekman, 1994; Goodwin et al. 2006; Gould, 2004; Hoschschild, 1983; Jasper, 1997, 1998; Tomkins, 1962, 1963). To summarize this

widely used typology, I draw on James Jasper's "The Emotions of Protest" (1998) which presents five categories: urges, reflex emotions, moods, long-term emotions (or loyalties, affective commitments), and moral emotions. *Urges* are pressing bodily needs that crowd out other feelings and attention until they are satisfied; they include, for example, lust, hunger, substance addictions, the need to urinate or defecate, exhaustion, and pain. Urges can affect politics, for example, by interfering with coordinated actions (e.g., dehydration striking after many hours in the heat). Similarly, forces aligned against social movements use urges strategically to disrupt dissent (e.g., torture). *Reflex* emotions, such as anger, fear, joy, surprise, shock, and disgust, are fairly quick, automatic responses to events and information. Unfortunately, reflexes are often taken as the paradigm for all emotions and in so doing the intensity, suddenness, and disruptive capacity of emotions is exaggerated. *Moods* energize or de-energize feelings that persist across settings; they condition and change our reflex emotions, and we carry them from one setting to another. *Long-term emotions* (or *affective commitment or loyalties*) are relatively stable feelings, positive or negative, about others or objects. They include love and hate, dislike, trust, mistrust, respect, or contempt. These long-term emotions are less tied to short-term assessments of how we are doing in the world and more to elaborate cognitive appraisals of others (human or non). *Moral emotions* involve feelings of approval and disapproval based on moral intuitions and principles, as well as the satisfactions we feel when we do the "right" (or "wrong") thing. For example, these emotions are evident when we experience compassion for the unfortunate or indignation over injustice (Jasper, 1998). At the end of this section I examine the way in which this typology imports the assumptions found in

the psychologization of emotions discourse into the analysis of social movements. I will also consider the consequences of these assumptions.

The application of this typology can be seen in attempts to understand the role of identity formation in the context of social movement theory. There exists a substantial amount of research on how contemporary social movements have formed through the mobilization of symbolic and material resources in collective identity formation, and this research has been built upon to emphasize the emotions that result in connections between members as well as how affective loyalties are generated (Eyerman, 2005; Jasper 1998; Melucci, 1989; Tarrow, 1998; Tilly, 2004; Touraine, 1992).

Relatedly, "collective solidarities" encompasses studies on a broad range of topics related to collective identities and politics. This includes a wide variety of topics in nationalism[38], American identity politics since the 1960s, and the emergence of the LGBTQ movements in the 1990s (Calhoun, 2001; Jasper, 1998). Jasper argues that as a deeply satisfying form of reputation and connection, collective identity is a goal as much as a means of an "emotional achievement." Jasper also notes that "even the experience of fear and anxiety, not uncommon in the midst of protest, can be a strong force in creating a sense of collectivity and be an attractive force in collective actions" (Jasper as cited in Eyerman, 2005: 43). Groups seem to be strengthened when they share reflex emotions in response to events or when they share affective loyalties to one another, what Jasper calls "reciprocal emotions" (1998). In an attempt to define both collective, individual, and public identity, Polletta and Jasper state:

[38] Topics here could include love and hatred in nationalism- for example, which groups and individuals or included or excluded from national identity, and how these borders/boundaries are delineated and formed.

> "To avoid overextension of the concept, we have defined collective identity as an individual's cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice or institution. It is a perception of a shared status or relation, which may be imagined rather than experienced directly, and it is distinct from personal identities, although it may form part of a personal identity". (2001: 285).

Thus, identities have a crucial *emotional* component that, according to Polletta and Jasper, mediates the communication and interpretation between individual and collective as one engages in both public and private spheres (Polletta et. al., 2001). Affective loyalties and commitments, as well as moral emotions, are significant here because the way that these "categories" interplay with a person's identity (how they see themselves in relation to the collective) can help to explain why people continue to participate in movements and maintain a commitment to movements politics even after the movements decline (Polletta et al., 2001).

Jasper's typology is also apparent in Nussbaum's writing about the importance of our "moral sensibilities." For Nussbaum, moral sensibilities form the background conditions for reflex emotions, which together she terms "background emotion" (2001). She argues that moral sensibilities are one of the most lasting accomplishments of social movements. For instance, contemporary movements can leave legacies for future movements such as know-how, social networks, frames, and other carriers of meaning. But they also can pass along ways of feeling about the world that future movements can build upon (Nussbaum, 2001). Likewise, Young applies Jasper's typology to inquire into "background," long-standing, affective commitments and moral emotions, which he

argues are what inform short-run "reflex" emotions. He suggests that reflex emotions tap into and are conditioned by this background; this interplay is "the key" to a moral shock (Young, 2001). Affective loyalties and moral emotions also interact with each other in the sense that collective identities are frequently defined by shared morals (Young, 2001). That is, moral emotions differ between groups (e.g., we might be quicker to see moral failings in our opponents than our own members). We also have moral emotions about our reflex emotions, for example, when we are ashamed of having reacted inappropriately (Nussbaum, 2001). The category of "feelings of being" I addressed in Chapter 2 might be another instructive way of articulating background emotions and how they form our moral sensibilities. For example, according to Gould, our reflex emotions are responses that shape our "radicalization" to a topic or event and fuel moral shock waves that are required to stimulate resistance (Gould, 2004). In other words, emotions are a *means* of protest.

Throughout the literature on social movements, emotions are often used to articulate the means and ends of protest. According to Jasper,

> "any flow of action throws up a constant stream of emotions, and the more positive they are—or the more emotional energy and excitement they generate—the more likely participants are to continue. The satisfactions of action, from the joy of fusion to the assertion of dignity, become a motivation every bit as important as a movement's stated goals" (Jasper, 2004: 296).

Emotional energy generated in one interaction gives people confident moods they can take to their next interaction, especially when they create symbols to remind them (Collins, 1990). Moods are seen, according to Jasper, as central to understanding the

means and ends of a protest. Seen in this way, each "victory," even a small one, yields confidence, attention, and emotional energy, all of which are advantages for further actions (Jasper, 2004). According to this view, if a mood of energy and agency feeds collective endeavours, so does a sense of loyalty to one's collective. Again, in relation to collective identification, it is both an end in itself—a basic human satisfaction—and also a means, that is, feeling like one "belongs" is the fulfillment of an existential need (Jasper, 2004). Likewise, according to Tilly, pride in one's group, especially in its moral worth, unanimity, size (numbers), and commitment, enhances commitment to collective actions (Tilly, 2004). In this regard, to the extent that I identify with a group, its goals become mine.

This summary of Jasper's influence on understanding the role of emotions in social movements shows that emotions are present in every phase and every aspect of protest, from individual motivation to mass mobilization to the generation of different feelings in crowds. These classifications of emotions can be employed across different contexts to provide insight into what is motivating people to resist, and how and why and when they engage in protest politics (Jasper, 1998)

Dominant Ontology of Emotion in Social Movement Studies

Jasper's typology of emotions forms the first aspect of a dominant ontology of emotions in social movement studies. The second aspect is the assertion that emotions come in combinations (Jasper, 1998; Kleres, 2005). For example, "anger tinged with moral shame differs from anger tinged with indignation" (Jasper, 2011: 302). Depending on what the "mix" is, these emotions have different implications for action. This

assertion—that emotions come in combinations—can be seen in Jasper's work when he offers a model of "moral batteries," which are literally a combination of a "negative" and a "positive" emotion. For example, Jasper writes about hope and it is defined in relation to a moral vision or ideology which suggests that the world should and could be different from the way it is (Jasper, 2011). The moral battery model suggests that the "positive pole" of a battery (e.g., hope) cannot "drive action forward" without the charge from the negative pole (e.g., distress born of the way things are). Therefore, the combination of positive and negative emotions, through their tension, help to energize actions and "drive [movements] forward" (Jasper, 2011: 300).

The third aspect of the dominant ontology of emotions in social movement studies is that "emotions are sequences," which means one emotion can lead to a cascade of others, usually in a predictable manner (Barker et al., 2008). A classic example of this sequential understanding of emotions is denial-anger-grief- acceptance. Similarly, Williamson speaks of "emotion chains" in relation to social movements, giving a temporal dimension to the pairs of emotions found in moral batteries (as cited in Jasper, 1998). In support of his findings on emotional chains, Williamson investigated whether people returned a year later to a to a Reclaiming camp (a feminist new-age religious movement). He found that an increase in hope during the event increased someone's chance of returning, whereas an increase in fear lowered it (as cited in Jasper, 1998).

The three aspects of the dominant ontology of emotions in social movement studies inform the conclusions that are drawn on how and why people protest. I argue these assumptions are informed by a psychologized perspective on emotions that in turn is based on essentialized ontology of the subject.

The Psychologized Approach Prevails

I argue that there are several interrelated and problematic tendencies in attempts to theorize emotions in the mainstream social movement studies. The dominant approach to emotions in social movement studies rests on the psychologized approach to emotions, which reifies emotions, offers an individualized understanding of emotions separate from the broader political economy, and relies on the centred subject.

First, many of the authors working in the field of social movements studies tend to present a reified view of emotions. That is, in the crudest sense, emotions have been written about as either "good" or "bad," "productive" or "destructive." What follows from this evaluative approach is a theory of emotions resting on a categorical dichotomy: emotions which are helpful for movements and debilitating emotions that impede movement success (Brown et al., 2009; Calhoun, 2001; Goodwin et al., 2006). This tendency is problematic because seeing positive emotions as creating positive outcomes creates a deterministic hierarchy of emotions in which some are prescribed and others proscribed. Complex feelings of resistance are thereby reduced to formulaic understandings of good and bad emotions. Take for example the idea that anger and fear are primary in creating and sustaining social movements. This not only conflates different types of feelings, expressions, and interactions but creates over generalizations about "what emotions do." As the case of Jasper's "moral batteries" exemplifies, "good" emotions do "good things," and "bad" emotions, on their own, aren't good. For instance, positive emotions are said to foster feelings of safety, openness, friendship, and trust. Such "positive" emotions are seen to contribute to the sustainability and strength of a social movement and social movement communities. On the other hand, affective

"remains" and their manifest "negative" emotions are seen to hinder the relationally between subjects within movements and are theorized as debilitating to the "sustainability" of activism (Brown et al., 2009; Calhoun, 2001; Jasper, 1998; 2004, 2011; Kleres, 2005). Or, in Jasper's model, the combination of negative and positive can create a "battery" that may or may not work to power resistance **(**Jasper, 2011; King, 2005; Kleres, 2005; Polletta et al., 2001). These articulations understand emotions in terms of how they "work" in relation to the defeat and success of movements, and thus determine that certain emotions generally have "negative" or "positive" reverberations (Barker, 2008; Goodwin et. al., 2006; Gould, 2004; Hochschild, 1983; Pickerill et al., 2006).

Another way that the understanding of emotions in social movement theory propagates the psychologizing approach is through offering an individualized understanding of emotions separate from the broader processes of political economy. The "dominant" way that emotions have been articulated in social movement theory does not focus on *how/where/when* we experience emotions and the broader political economy within which they are experienced, but rather the emotions become property of "you" or "I" to "deal" with, and emphasis is on whether the emotions *themselves* are beneficial or not. One can become trapped in the positive model—not only "good emotions are good, bad emotions are bad," but the feeling is often "mine" vs. "yours", especially in a conflict situation. This serves to recreate "hierarchies of emotion" and "feeling structures"[39] that can serve to discipline activist spaces and create models for "good" activism while

[39] These terms refer to emotional hierarchies that discipline or shape feelings and experiences of them in group settings.

informing therapeutic models for activists on how to manage "negative" emotions rather than taking the view that both the emotions and the relations are forming parts of complex processes and outcomes that are not "individual" (Pickerill et al., 2006; Ruddick, 2010; Wilkinson, 2009).

Finally, as the introductory section of the chapter suggests, it is not possible to separate the ontology of a centered subject from the discourses on emotions because the discourses revolve around the notion of a contained subjectivity, emotions that an individual is able to deal with "personally" despite their emergence within the context of protest. The exploration of the role of emotion in social movements theory, as well as the conclusions drawn on their impact thus continue to intensify the ontology that there is an essential subject which is "grounding" the experience of emotions, which determines what follows. Both the reifying of emotions and the lack of complex analysis that places these experiences in broader contexts points to assumptions which take as a certainty that there exists a limited range of nameable and universalizable emotions that are bound within individuals. The example of shame converting into pride, or anger into hope reflect all the aspects of the dominant ontology—typology, combinations, and sequences—and show how complex sensations in protest become formulaic and standardized. Thus, when Jasper talks about shame being converted into pride in movements, or anger that moves towards hope, the reader is meant to relate with a recognition of the emotion, that is, this emotion is experienced as *the same* for the reader—they are assumed to signal a sensation or experience everyone can relate to; they are universalized and theoretically acceptably so. Likewise, emotions such as hope, sadness, shame, grief, and so on are never actually explained or defined in Jasper's

examples. This raises important questions: what do these terms refer to? Are the experiences the same for everyone? How are these emotions defined and measured?

I am not attempting to answer these questions here but want to point the problems arising when these assumptions are not unpacked. The point is that these assumptions ground the most widely cited literature on emotions in social movements, and succumbing to the usage of these terms without context or definition points to how the epistemological commitments in this field are based on the dominant ontology of the psychologizing approach to emotions. I am suggesting that this limits the way of apprehending, conceptualizing, and articulating complex experiences and limits the conclusions that the theory draws in a similar way.

In the next chapter (Chapter 4) I review the concept of autonomy and the literature on emotions in autonomy oriented social movements in the west. My intention is to compare where/how emotions are dealt with from an autonomy-oriented perspective and the affects of these on movement communities.

Chapter 4:

Exploring the Concept and Practice of "Autonomous" in the West

The previous chapter outlined the dominant tendencies in social movement studies with respect to the role of emotions in movements. In this chapter I explore and contextualize the object of "autonomous" politics before examining the subset of literature that deals with emotion and affect in the context of autonomy-oriented social movements.

Autonomy-Oriented Struggles

Autonomy-oriented politics are anti-capitalist, anti-oppressive, and usually encompass queer and anarchist-inspired ideas of responsibility and reciprocity, horizontal organizing, and direct action. These currents, or *logics of struggle*, are different from the "mainstream" social movements I explored in the last chapter and are distinct from other movements working towards social justice because they are informed by more radically democratic assumptions than traditional movements of protest and demand. They consciously attempt to challenge the failings of previous ways of doing politics on the left (e.g., the reproduction of internal power hierarchies and the inability to deal with difference within and outside of groups) (Chatterton, 2005; Day, 2004; Pickerill et.al., 2006; Srivastava, 2006; Uzelman, 2008). Such movements seek to be autonomous from dominant institutions like the state, corporations, and often, social democratic institutions like labour unions. But autonomous struggle, at its best, also entails a continual commitment to resist wider relations of domination (i.e., exploitation, sexism, ecological

destruction, etc.).

Katsiaficas, for example, focused on the autonomous Italian and German anarchist autonomy-oriented movements in the late 1960s and 70s. These struggles were of the same substance as "western" autonomy-oriented struggles in that "they wanted to live lives of their own collective making, not ones determined by decisions in corporate boardrooms and government ministries" (1997: 25). The commitments of these movements were "anti-politics," which relates to the practices of autonomy (De Angelis, 2007; Katsiaficas 1997). Anti-politics isn't about being non-political but about refusing to partake in politics as defined and limited by the dominant order (De Angelis, 2007). In other words, anarchist movements, and other movements that embrace autonomy as a logic of struggle have no desire to "take power" from oppressive institutions, and neither is there a desire to be recognized by them (in contrast to dissent or demand politics) (Bey, 1991). Rather, there is an opposition to hierarchies in general and a priority to practice alternative expressions to those that are ordered around the market state.

These movements manifested projects that created social relations without political representation and hierarchy (Shantz, 1999). Rather than be concerned with immediate effects or "success" of these initiatives, the intention was "more in our creation of a climate of autonomy, disobedience and resistance" (*Aufheben*, 1998: 107). Through an ongoing effort in the present, and through a focus on the everyday, "a positive pointer to the kind of social relations that could exist: no money, the end of exchange values, communal living, no wage labour, no ownership of space," these movements attempted to practice a decolonization of everyday life (*Aufheben*, 1998: 110). Consequently, autonomy-oriented movements across the world are fluid in that they

aim for a refusal to be co-opted or labelled by the state, corporate interests, or shaped by the traditional ideological strategies of the left (Bey, 1991; Day, 2005, De Angelis, 2007; Katsiaficas, 1997).

Thus, most forms of autonomous politics are centrally focused on creating alternative relationships, compositions, and institutions that include, for example, co-operative living arrangements, urban agricultural initiatives, alternative and autonomous media, popular education, and free schools, to name a few (Katsiaficas, 1997; Pickerill, 2007; Wilkinson, 2009). By reinventing political processes and identity construction through non-hierarchical organization and radically democratic decision-making processes, autonomy-oriented social movement communities attempt to create open and accessible, horizontally organized forms of activism that are radically participatory (Chatterton, 2005, 2010; Gordon, 2007; Ruddick, 2010; Star, 2006; Wilkinson, 2009). The creation of autonomous spaces and communities shows that people can, and do, live alternatives to the dominant order even while existing in it. I will define autonomy-oriented struggle thusly: resistance and action to create and define new modes of being that are antagonistic to the imperatives of capitalism and the form of life it imposes while still maintaining a broader commitment to resisting all forms of domination[40] (Alfred, 1999; Bey, 1991; Day, 2005; De Angelis, 2007; Holloway, 2002; Katsiaficas, 2007).

[40] The imperatives of capitalism organize social and economic relations around the demands of the market and the state which require hierarchical and exploitative social relations. Capital and the state cannot be understood independently of one another- many anarchists tend to focus more on the state as the principle organizer of capital and thus the desire to dissolve/struggle against the state is key to anti-capital resistance (Bey, 1991).

Autonomous Social Movement Studies

Across different traditions, the concept "autonomous" refers to a common logic of struggle that informs the efforts of people working to live independently from capital, euro-centric values, widespread relations of domination (e.g. racism), and ongoing projects of colonialism.[41] Despite the broad definition of an "autonomous ethos," different autonomy-oriented political commitments will only ever achieve relative autonomy in certain areas. For example, one of my participants was part of an autonomous media collective that "succeeded" in creating/distributing independent media, but within the collective sexism prevailed (S- interviews).

Anarchist traditions, the autonomist Marxist tradition, Indigenous traditions, and more recently work in anti-racist, queer theory, and critical social movement theory and practice have all articulated logics of autonomous struggle and are all theorized on in the context of social movements. Thus, the term "autonomous" is used not to indicate a homogenous school of thought but a common thread running through the writings of anarchists, autonomist Marxists, Indigenous people, and others variously labelled activists committed to practicing and developing their own "forms of life"[42], that can be defined as whole ways of life (or cultures) that are informed by radically different assumptions, habit, dispositions, etc. than prevail in the culture of capitalism (Alfred, 1999; Alfred et al., 2005; Day, 2005; Uzelman, 2008). While autonomy figures

[41] As I mentioned in the introduction, there is no such thing as complete "autonomy." There is always a relationship between the self, the collective, and the dominant order. That is, autonomy is always an expression of constraints and freedoms and our relative positioning within and between and a part of these constraints and freedoms; there is no "outside" to power (Foucault, 1975). In this project, when I use the term "autonomous" it is with the acknowledgement that no complete autonomy is achievable. For this reason, I try to employ "autonomy-oriented" when possible.

[42] The term is distinct from "life forms" in the biological sense.

prominently in a wide range of social and political movements, in the sections below I focus on the meaning of autonomy in the traditions that have most influenced the activists interviewed for this study: anarchism, indigenous thought, and autonomist Marxism.

Anarchism

In everyday usage, anarchism is generally understood as a utopian vision of a society living without government. However, it is worth quoting an excerpt from the 15-page definition in the Encyclopaedia Britannia written by Peter Kropotkin, a prominent anarchist from the late 19th century. He wrote that anarchism is

> The name given to a principle of theory of life and conduct under which society is conceived without government-harmony in such a society being obtained, not by submission to law, or by obedience to any authority, but by free agreements, concluded between various groups, territorial and professional, freely constituted for the sake of production and consumption as also for the satisfaction of the infinite variety of the needs and aspirations of a civilized being. In a society developed on these lines, the voluntary associations which already now begin to cover all fields of human activity would take a still greater extension so as to be substituted for the state and its functions (Anarchist Archives, Peter Kropotkin, paragraph 2).

The passage points to the richness of anarchist theory, especially given the length of Encyclopaedia entry; and this is just an overview.

Two components of the classical anarchist ontology are "autonomy" and "federation" (Kropotkin, 1989/1902). Their relationship to each other is as complimenting forces of opposition against dominance. "Autonomy" is the force conditioning one's life according to one's choosing and "federation" is a collection of

processes and networks that emerge and organize to facilitate this ongoing self-valorizing effort[43]. That is, through federation communities create the conditions to continuously foster autonomy (Kropotkin, 1989/1902). According to Shantz, "autonomy without federation would be reaction, whereas federation without autonomy would end self-determination" (Shantz, 2009: 65). In classical anarchist thought, the logic of "autonomy" is a cornerstone of the belief that our lives can be organized outside of the state and its productive institutions (education, health care, prisons, markets). Anarchism is basically the belief in the possibility of a stateless society where different forms of domination no longer place limits on the abilities of people to create and develop their own systems and structures of collective sustenance (Bey, 1991).

The "decolonization of everyday life" has been a defining aspect of anarchist and autonomy-oriented social movements from the late 70s up until present day, and these movements share the desire to challenge, in minute detail, the existing capitalist system and resist multiple forms of oppression (Bey, 1991). Of utmost importance to autonomous resistance is struggle by individuals and collectives against being "subsumed under the law of value" (Laffey et al., 2016: 97). This approach is usually viewed as disturbing by those who espouse identity politics, or negatively by the established "left" because "being subsumed under the law of value" implicitly criticizes the majority of the "left" as lacking a reflective anti-oppressive ethic and therefore espousing liberal, co-opted, and oppressive practices that support capitalism and wider systems of domination (Bey, 1991). Life under capitalism creates dependency on the state and the market, and

[43] Self valorization is a concept from the autonomist tradition and literally means that the generation of value is found in the very act and process of living the creative life of ones choosing, in the striving away from the values of capital (Smith, 2002).

thus capitalism and other forms of domination are antithetical to autonomy-oriented anarchism. These practices include a DIY (or DIT, "do it together") ethos, horizontal organizing, and direct action, the reclaiming of public space, and the organizing around affinities (Day, 2004).

Contemporary anarchists such as Richard Day and David Graeber argue that one way autonomy-oriented social movements/politics can aim to avoid this subsuming is by "practicing autonomy through a logic of affinity rather than a logic of hegemony" (Shantz, 2012; para 13). This anti-hegemonic approach is one that does not seek to crystallize or articulate normative ideas (Wilkinson, 2009). Normative ideas seek a moral basis for human enquiry, namely "a moral basis for human conduct and what is right or good, and proposes what can be possible", which is in contrast to an affinity- an autonomy-based approach which "places considerations of ethics at the heart of geography and participatory, action-based approaches which seek to co-develop theory and action with the 'others' of encounters" (Wilkinson, 2009: 37). Here we encounter the coming together around affinities where conversations with unknown others force us to build (un)common ground and engage in the co-production of socially useful and autonomy-oriented knowledges and practices (Anonymous, 2000; Chatterton, 2006, 2010; Day, 2001, 2004, 2005).

According to Day, organizing around affinities helps to incline autonomy-oriented organizing into non-hierarchical forms that remain non-hegemonic[44] in nature, while still embracing revolutionary difference. Thus, organizing around affinities can stimulate

[44] What Hakim Bey refers to as "anti-hegemonic" is the same as Day's utilization of "non-hegemonic".

(are?) what Bey calls (TAZ) temporary autonomous zones (Bey, 1991). According to Bey, these zones have an important role to play since they open spaces for a (re) constitution of politics by destabilizing established collective and conventional identity categories, and organizational styles (which often default to identity categories). The TAZ favours "inter-subjective reasoning as one of its modes, and also involves typically discounted affects such as passion, strategy, rhetoric and style" (Day, 2001: 23). Thus, it is more difficult for such spaces and their organizational style to be commoditized or colonized since they emerge in defiance of political containers and for-profit encounters with difference (Bey, 1991).

The Zapatista's are a widely cited example an example of revolutionary difference in autonomy oriented social movements (Bey,1996; Day, 2001, 2005; Graeber, 2004;), and while it is not my intention to explore their particular struggle here, it is a good segue into the common thread between autonomy-oriented anarchist struggles and indigenous struggles because the Zapatistas have established and defended autonomous zones from the Mexican police state, and they defend their difference (as Mayans) "without asking others to become Mayans," something that harkens back to the practice of autonomy being disruptive of capital. But again, "particularity must not seek hegemony, it must remain anti-hegemonistic in character"[45] (Bey, 1996: 25).

Indigenous Perspectives on Autonomy

It is not possible here to express the rich and varied ways that indigenous peoples

[45] The Zapatistas are also an example of relative autonomy. While they have achieved successful autonomy from the Mexican state, they have not been without critique as having maintained engendered hierarchies within autonomous zones. The feminist movement within the EZLN has shed light on the existing sexism within communities (Castillo, NACLA.org, para 7).

express and relate to the word "autonomy" because there is no simplistic pan-indigenous ideology. Therefore, each community and tradition will translate, define, and challenge notions of autonomy (western or otherwise) differently (Alfred et al., 2005). However, there are some indigenous scholars that make general statements about autonomy; this section serves to give a sketch of these general determinations.

Taiaiake Alfred, for instance, argues that Western conceptualizations of nature and power clash with indigenous ontologies because they include "nature as a stakeholder and [aim] to achieve harmony and peaceful co-existence among all relationships (nature and human) in a community" (Alfred, 1999: 200). Thus, indigenous notions of autonomy differ from Western notions in which nature is viewed as an inert resource to be used and exploited.

Smith (2006) articulates that, in general, autonomy-oriented indigenous struggles are waged against ongoing processes of colonization. This includes the struggle against colonial ideologies that justify euro-centric values while treating indigenous people as subjects (Smith, 2006). Such struggle is a rejection of European ways of knowing and the privileging of Western science and material progress over nature instead of honoring the relationships between people and their land. In contrast to these euro-centric values, indigenous nature-based knowledge systems value "reciprocity or reciprocal relations that define responsibilities and ways of relating between humans and the world around them" (Robyn, 2003: 202.) An example of this reciprocal relationship can be seen in indigenous technology, which, as Von Thater-Braan argues, is "responsive and responsible to the ecology in which it lives and from which it came" (2007:6). This contrasts sharply with North American technology, which often presupposes a hierarchy with nature existing for

use/mass extraction by settlers.

According to Taiaikai Alfred, the common thread between settler autonomous movements and autonomy-oriented indigenous struggles is that there is "no absolute authority, no coercive enforcement of decisions, no hierarchy, and no separate ruling entity" (1999:68). In the words of bell hooks, autonomy-oriented subjects are "not looking to that [colonizing] Other for recognition" but are "recognizing [them] selves and willingly making contact with all who would engage [them] in a constructive manner" (1990: 22). Indigenous communities that adopt an autonomy-oriented paradigm advocate for the ongoing and active development of their own traditions of governance (Alfred, 1999; Alfred et al., 2005; Esteva, 2001).

The notion of "governance" is not to be confused with autonomy-oriented indigenous people as seeking "sovereignty" (Alfred, 1999). For autonomy-oriented indigenous peoples "sovereignty" is embedded in the state system and is an *anti*-indigenous perspective: "it is a social creation located in a particular social and political order that is designed to do harm…it reflects the framework of a colonial order" (Alfred, 1999: 65). According to Alfred, governance structures and social institutions of indigenous people "should be designed to empower individuals and reinforce tradition in order to maintain the balance found in nature," which stands in contrast to a state system that is based on hierarchies of power, a system of wage labour, and rank and file militarization mentality (1999: 64). Sovereignty is a concept that articulates a "Western view of power and human relationships so thoroughly entrenched that it appears valid, objective, and natural" (1999: 67). Alfred argues that a key challenge is then to "de-think the concept of sovereignty and replace it with a notion of power that is based on more

appropriate premises" (1999: 67). This is a refusal to practice "nationhood" or "self-government" since it is precisely this context (the belief in the state as "providing" our freedom) that institutionalizes the ongoing project of colonialism and will therefore never satisfy the "imperatives of native American political traditions" (1999: 68). In Alfred's words, "harmonious cooperation and coexistence founded on respect for autonomy and the principle of self-determination are precluded by the state's insistence on dominion and its exclusionary notion of sovereignty" (1999: 68).

For some indigenous communities, autonomy cannot be practiced without recognizing the harms perpetrated against them in the past. Thus "autonomy" is linked with complex and contested notions of "justice" (Alfred, 1999). In these cases, indigenous peoples demand special recognition for the injustices they suffered in settler societies rather than wanting to just merely share more fairly in the benefits of those societies. The withholding of recognition is said to harm those who are not recognized by restricting their freedom to act and move towards greater self-realization, therefore tying together the notion of autonomy as self-determination and the notion of justice (Alexander et al., 1996).

To provide a theoretical foundation for this relationship Honneth (1994) proposed a theory of justice grounded in Hegel's notion of the struggle for recognition. In Honneth's framework, social injustice occurs when recognition that is held to be legitimate by those demanding it is withheld. To be clear, this definition of justice is one rooted in a recognition-driven, liberal, social-democratic framework that complicates the idea of "autonomy" as being a rejection of recognition from the state (Alfred et al., 2005). In other words, the goal of resistance in this context is for oppressed groups to be

recognized by a dominant order, something that is not usually associated with settler-based autonomous social movements. For many autonomy-oriented scholars and activists, recognition-driven resistance does nothing to meaningfully challenge the power relations on which the dominant order is built.

The dominant order often remains largely unchanged even after previously unrecognized groups are included within it. This is a conviction shared by autonomous-oriented indigenous thinkers like Alfred and Corntassal (2005) who do not want to be recognized by an oppressor. Instead, they wish to walk away from the dominant order. That said, according to Alfred, the recognition-based framework is not always conflictual with autonomy. He argues that the kind of justice that indigenous people seek in their relationship with the state has to do with "restoring a regime of respect" which is generally consistent with the practice of autonomy from an indigenous perspective (Alfred, 1999). Justice as "restoring a regime of respect" stands in contrast to the statist notion, which conceives of "justice" as rooted in the classical notion of sovereignty. Alfred notes that the statist notion, "which in the name of equity, may direct more material resources to indigenous people" yet at the same time "preserves the state's superior position relative to them and to the earth" (Alfred, 1999: 68). Alfred summarizes the indigenous conception of justice:

> "The Indigenous conception of justice builds a framework of respectful coexistence on the fundamental acknowledgement of the integrity and autonomy of the various elements that make up the relationship. It goes far beyond even the most liberal Western ideas of justice in advancing the cause of peace, because it explicitly allows for difference while promoting the

construction of sound relationships among autonomous elements" (1999: 68).

In conclusion, autonomy-oriented indigenous struggles generally seek to create sustainable communities of their own choosing through a strengthening of traditions. Autonomy-oriented anarchists, such as Day and Graeber, argue that a decolonizing worldview must be propagated among settlers as well.[46] As indigenous scholar Leanne Simpson has once put it, "settler society must also change their ways, to decolonize their relationships with the land, and join with us in building a sustainable future based upon mutual recognition, justice, and respect" (2008: 14). In this regard, if settler autonomy-oriented struggles have a genuine commitment to resist wider relations of domination (e.g., exploitation, sexism, ecological destruction, etc.), these struggles should learn from indigenous struggles as to how to continue decolonizing settler mentality.

Autonomist Marxism

In autonomist Marxism, autonomy is used with an emphasis on class struggle, the capacity of workers and people in general to take the initiative in resisting capital, and the ability of the working class to force changes in the organization of capital and the state[47] (Tronti, 1966; Negri, 1989). Autonomism emerges out of working class and social movement struggles of 1970s Italy and the work of scholars like Mario Tronti, Paolo

[46] See *New Socialist*, (#58); Davis (2010), and the issue of *Affinities* on anarcha-indigenism (www.affinitiesjournal.org).

[47] Theorists like John Holloway even stress that while capital is always dependent on the working class for its existence (surplus value being derived from the exploitation of living labour), the working class is always potentially autonomous from capital. That is, capital needs labour to survive and workers need wage labour to survive *within* the boundaries of capitalism, but the working class has the potential always to produce and live outside capitalist relations—i.e., become autonomous. See Holloway's *Change the World Without Taking Power*.

Virno, Antonio Negri, Marirosa Dalla Costa, and Sergio Bologna, but it has subsequently influenced Marxists the world over. Where most Western Marxisms tend to emphasize capital's capacity to dominate and control the working class in the process of accumulation, autonomists draw attention to the role of struggle and creativity as workers resist exploitation (Dyer- Witherford, 1999). For many autonomists, working class struggle is the leading edge of capitalist development. In other words, it is resistance that forces capital to adopt new strategies of accumulation (e.g., new technologies, forms of social control, organizational forms) as it continually attempts to harness the working class as labour power (Hardt & Negri, 2000; Lazzarato, 1996). This distinction between the working class and labour power allows autonomists to expand their notion of class struggle to new subjects (e.g. students, domestic workers, service industry workers, indigenous peoples, etc.) and to greatly broaden the terrain of class struggle beyond the factory walls (Dyer-Witherford, 1999). Indeed, many autonomists have employed the concept "social factory"[48] (addressed below) to highlight the ways capital attempts to colonize greater aspects of society in its search for profit as well as the struggles of a wide range of social actors in resisting this process, a theoretical contribution that in my work, contributes to the discussion of the way that capital has colonized our emotional lives (which in turn (re)intensifies capitalism).

I will review 3 contributions from the autonomist tradition that relate to and inform my argument that the dominant way of relating in the western autonomy-oriented

[48] This concept is used to highlight two aspects of contemporary capitalism that have emerged in response to working class struggle. The first is the ways in which the techniques of control exercised in the factory expand into wider aspects of society, and the second is the ways in which greater aspects of social life have become productive of capital (the "factory without walls") (Tronti, 1966; Negri,1989). The emergence of the social factory marks the moment when "the whole society becomes an articulation of production. In short, all of society lives as a function of the factory and the factory extends its exclusive domination over all of society" (Tronti, as quoted in Thoburn, 2003: 78).

communities I investigated is one that is grounded in identity-based interactions that operates according to an emotional-based approach to conflict, both of which reflect capital's colonizing affects (or harnessing of affective labour, below). These concepts are 1) Social factory; 2) Immaterial Labour; 3) Hardt and Negri's notions of "empire", "multitude", and "the common".

The Social Factory

This concept is used to highlight two aspects of contemporary capitalism that have emerged in response to working class struggle. The first is the ways in which the techniques of control exercised in the factory expand into wider aspects of society, and the second is the ways in which greater aspects of social life have become productive of capital (the "factory without walls") (Tronti, 1966; Negri ,1989). The emergence of the social factory marks the moment when "the whole society becomes an articulation of production. In short, all of society lives as a function of the factory and the factory extends its exclusive domination over all of society" (Tronti, as quoted in Thoburn, 2003: 78). In other words, social life and work (as productive of value) increasingly overlap until "the whole of society is placed at the disposal of profit" (Negri, 1989: 79). Dyer-Witheford summarizes these processes as "wage labour is deconcentrated, spatially and temporally dispersed throughout society, and interleaved with unpaid time in new and irregular rhythms." (1999: 80). In other words, there is a harnessing of the creative capacities of human populations beyond the factory walls. This happens through the expansion of new forms of labour in what is often referred to as the service sector, in effect increasing commodification of social activities as work.

The social factory is also an expression of working class resistance to exploitation. The social factory emerges in response to the struggles of the "mass worker" in the post-war period where work was concentrated in massive factory facilities and therefore susceptible to forms of mass resistance (e.g. unionization, strikes, slow-downs) (Lazzaroto, 1996). In this post-war context, capital was forced into a compromise with this well-organized working class – relatively high wages tied to increases in productivity, a social wage (e.g. education, health care, welfare, etc.) and control over productive processes. In order to escape these factory centred conflicts, capital "socializes" itself, frees itself from the confines of factory walls. Thus the concept greatly expands the traditional Marxist notion of the worker (as productive subject and as resisting subject) as more aspects of social life are incorporated into capitalist circuits. My interview participants shared how the current "emotions based" and "identity-based" way that conflict (especially) is being dealt with in the western autonomy-oriented communities they had participated in shows how our most intimate areas of social life have become productive of capital. The amplification and fragmentation of traumatized and burned out people who were working to resist capital creates enfeebled resistance, and factions on "the left", further serving capital's interest (Ahmed, 2004b; Berlant, 2011; Massumi, 2015). This "working" for capital, viz a viz the way we view our "self" in relation to "collective", or in interpersonal (and intimately personal) ways could be classified as both the cultural content of commodities, and the affective dimension of what is referred to by autonomists as "immaterial labour".

Immaterial Labour

As the social factory becomes hegemonic, there is reduction in size of the industrial work force (in the North) and a concurrent expansion of what autonomists refer to as "immaterial labour" (Hardt & Negri, 2000, Lazzarato, 1996). This concept refers to two different aspects of labour. The first is the "informational content" of commodities, and the second is the "cultural content" of the commodity. Lazzarato explains "the 'informational content' of the commodity, it refers directly to the changes taking place in workers' labour processes in big companies in the industrial and tertiary sectors, where the skills involved in direct labour are increasingly skills involving cybernetics and computer control (and horizontal and vertical communication)" (Lazzarato, 1996: 133). "Cultural content", in contrast, relates directly how our intimate lives are shaped by capitalism and refers to a series of activities that are not normally recognized as "work", in other words, the kinds of activities involved in "defining and fixing cultural and artistic standards, fashions, tastes, consumer norms and, more strategically, public opinion." (Lazzarato, 1996: 133). Dyer-Witheford illustrates some of the ways immaterial labour has become more prevalent, for example in the conversion of (traditionally) female domestic labour into forms of employment such as daycare, healthcare, cleaning, fast food etc. Likewise, the diversification of cultural industries such as knowledge work, aesthetics, communications; music, entertainment, advertising and fashion all reflect the expansion of culture producing markets that are driven by immaterial labour (Dyer-Witherford, 1999). The rise of immaterial labour is also indicated by the blurring of waged and non-waged time.

A key component of immaterial labour is what Autonomists term "affective

labour", a term used to specify the aspect of immaterial labour that involves the production and manipulation of affect in order to facilitate specific feelings of well-being, desire, etc. Some examples of this are the work of care provided by workers in health professions, erotic labour of sex workers, performances of excitement and joy by food industry service staff, advertiser's channelling of desire, etc. According to Dyer Witherford, "the activities of people not just as workers but as students, consumers, shoppers, and television viewers are now directly integrated into the production process." (Witheford, 1999: 80). I argue that another dimension to "affective labour" is the ongoing anti-capitalist work that *is not intended* to be productive of capitalism, but is. Anti-capitalist resistance that produces and manipulates affect detrimentally through harming each other and ourselves (fracturing, calling out, excommunicating, identity based-conflicts, burnout related to lack of support/in-fighting, etc.). This is affective labour in the sense that it is productive of capitalism. The more fractured and damaged "the left" is, the less linkages, affinities, care, support and community there is and the weaker and less joyful the resistance spirit is reflecting how capitalism has expanded into our very ways of relating/disconnecting to one another. Being unable to overcome basic and 'everyday' interpersonal differences 'on the left' is clearly a powerful and divisive tool.

Immaterial labour, however, isn't merely a concept to name new forms of domination and exploitation; it isn't purely functional to capital. Rather, authors like Lazzarato and Hardt and Negri see it as a potentiality that could lead to social transformation through increased opportunities for human interaction, creativity and expression. Such instances of "self-valorization" or "auto-valorization" (Cleaver, 1992: 128-129) in which people not only resist capitalist domination but also creatively liberate

time, space or resources from control of capital are seen in various forms of autonomy-oriented activism (such as free schools), this is also where the practices of relating transpersonally through affect vs. personally through a psychologised and emotional discourse, in my argument, would creatively liberate time, space, and disorient the existing practices that abed the production of capitals interest (what this could look like I discuss in the epilogue to this dissertation)

Empire, Multitude, the Common

A brief summary of Hardt and Negri's influential trilogy offers three overarching concepts that can help to inform my investigation into affect in autonomy oriented social movement communities.

Empire

"Empire" refers to a new form of sovereignty that has emerged in the era of globalized capitalism; although many authors have pointed to the decline of sovereignty of nation states as capital becomes more mobile and global, and supranational institutions (e.g. WTO) emerge, they suggest that a new global form of sovereignty develops: "sovereignty has taken a new form, composed of a series of national and supranational organisms united under a single logic of rule." (Hardt & Negri, 2000: xii). They contrast Empire to previous forms of imperialism; "no territorial center of power and does not rely on fixed boundaries or barriers. It is a *decentered* and *deterritorializing* apparatus of rule that progressively incorporates the entire global realm within its open, expanding frontiers. Empire manages hybrid identities, flexible hierarchies, and plural exchanges

through modulating networks of command." (2000: xii-xiii). Through the decentred networks that make up Empire flow people, wealth and information; it thus is made possible through complex systems of global communication. Empire has global geographic reach and intensive social scope. It is both an analysis of international relations but also of everyday life under real subsumption of capitalist relations. Thus, capital harnesses the productive capacities of its subjects at work (as labour power) but also in consumption, education, training, leisure, etc. Human beings are even treated as raw material (e.g. extraction and commodification of genetic info). In short, Empire is the control of and exploitation of life itself.

Multitude

As in most autonomist accounts, Hardt and Negri do not limit themselves to understanding domination; they also highlight the ways in which Empire opens up new avenues for resistance and even the possibility of liberation. Adapting Spinoza's concept, "multitude" refers to the capacity of the mass of humanity to disrupt the "constituted power" of Empire and realize "constituent power" of democratic self-rule. The multitude is a heterogeneous, amorphous active social subject, it is "composed of a set of *singularities* – and by singularity here we mean a social subject whose difference cannot be reduced to sameness, a difference that remains different." (Hardt & Negri, 2004: 99)**.**

Despite this different, they insist that it is not fragmented or incoherent; it is active and able to rule itself; in fact, they argue that it is the only subject able to realize democracy (2004:99). The multitude arises precisely because capital spreads into new social terrains and renders more aspects of daily life productive and in doing so it also

creates new areas of resistance and contestation.

The Common

In *Commonwealth*, Hardt and Negri clarify the way in which the multitude might push through Empire to a democratic future: "A democracy of the multitude is imaginable and possible only because we all share and participate in the common." (2009: xiii)." The common" refers to two things. One, is "the common wealth of the material world – the air, the water, the fruits of the soil, and all nature's bounty – which in the classic European political texts is often claimed to be the inheritance of humanity as a whole, to be shared together." (xiii)**.** And, "those results of social production that are necessary for social interaction and further production, such as knowledges, languages, codes, information, affects, and so forth." (xiii). Hardt and Negri suggest that the second aspect of the common is more significant to their argument; other Marxists see potentialities for emancipation in the workings of capital; capitalism itself is generating commodities that resist privatization (e.g. ideas, images, affects), but for them, "the transition is already in process: contemporary capitalist production by addressing its own needs is opening up the possibility of and creating the bases for a social and economic order grounded in the common." (x). Basically, for Hardt and Negri, the common and the multitude are bound up with one another then; they are mutually constitutive of one another.

Some Thoughts on Affect and Autonomy

This subsection has surveyed some of the key ideas that inform the concept of "autonomy." Insights into the disciplinary realm of emotional life can be enhanced

through an understanding of what it means to be "autonomy-oriented." Capital harnesses the productive capacities of its subjects at work (as labour power) but also in consumption, education, training, leisure, interpersonal relations, etc., and it is here that the emotional lives of subjects are subsumed and made productive of capital's colonizing power. In the words of Terranova (2004), "To be socialized is to be made productive, and to become a subject is to be made subject to value—not only as an employee but as a parent, shopper, and student, as a flexibilized home worker, as an audience in communicative networks, indeed even as a transmitter of genetic information" (81). The importance of our intimate lives is precisely where capital produces the "affective labour" that devastates vital resistance: in subjects that harm one another in most "radical" spaces of resistance, accumulating strife and conflict in otherwise potentially emancipatory spaces that might creatively be free(r) of these processes of capital.

Our intimate lives and interpersonal relationships can be viewed as the common quality shared by theories of temporary autonomous zones (TAZ), affinities, and the radical and participatory forms of democracy advocated by autonomist Marxists, all of which can thrive "outside the power of the State and its mechanisms of representation" as a constituent power, "a free association of constitutive social forces"[49] (Hardt, 1996: 5-6). According to Massimo De Angelis, although it might wish to appear so, capitalism is not a totalization of life. He explains that beyond the reified relations of capital, there is "life"—actually existing alternative social relations (2007). Thus, although emotions work to produce and regulate the capitalist subject in "Empire", social relations are

[49] Constituent power and constituted power exist in tension with one another manifesting, usually, as a clash between "the people" and "constituted powers" which is basically the power of the constituted (executive, legislature, judiciary) exercising power over the subject of constituted power, the people (Loughlin, 2013).

constantly experimented with by "communities" newly created around struggles but also by any traditional community which has not yet been subsumed by capital or which resists subsumption. What these "communities" still share and control is their "commons"; the ongoing and irreducible antagonism between capital and a subject is then created around the battle between enclosure and the defence of "commons" (De Angelis, 2007). I suggest that the "commons" can include the creative potential of the spaces that open relationally between/around people who come together through shared affinities with a shared ethic to resist and recreate spaces relatively free from capital's exploitative imperatives. In the context of the psychologized approach to emotions, finding and creating something "other" than the dominant discourse is an expression of temporary autonomous spaces and *is* autonomy-oriented resistance.

The next section reviews the existing literature on autonomy-oriented social movements in order to ask the following question: how much success have the autonomy-oriented groups studied in the literature (including my own study) had in achieving autonomy from the dominant psychologized approach to emotions?

Emotions and Affect in Autonomous movements and practices

Despite the fact that affect and autonomy-oriented resistance work are inseparable, there are not many studies that examine affect and autonomy. In this section I will review this small body of literature and the debates that are relevant to the theorization of, and practice within, autonomous social centers and wider autonomous practices.

Emotions/affect in autonomous social movement literature

The literature on the role of emotions/affect in western autonomous social movements has running through it four prominent themes: emotional sustainability, emotion management practices, and sad militancy, and the practice of consensus. Several studies have examined the common practices and principles of radical communities and these themes are evident to varying extents in each.

The first theme, emotional sustainability, underpins almost all of the emotional practices I review. Emotional sustainability refers to the ability to manage emotions so that they lead to positive outcomes (Brown, 2007). This theme assumes there are "good emotions," which are positive and have positive results and impacts, and "bad emotions," which have negative consequences and impacts on the ability to continue activism (Chatterton, 2005, 2010; Pickerill et al., 2006). Emotional sustainability is said to be achieved through the management of good and bad emotions; the theme is linked to burnout and especially its prevention. In the literature where this theme is prominent, focus is on forging the link between healthy emotional practices and emotional sustainability in order to avoid the personal tolls radical resistance work often takes on activists (Brown, 2007; Brown et al., 2009; Chatterton, 2006; Crimethinc, 2001; Gordon, 2007; Irvine, 2007)

Emotion management practices form the second theme running through literature considering the role of emotions/affect in autonomous social movements (King, 2005; Kleres, 2005; Laughton, 2006; Pickerill et al., 2006). Authors have explored existing models and practices used to manage and deal with emotions in autonomy-oriented organizing. These include practices such as "emotional reflexivity," "check-ins, debriefs,

and let's talk", as well as "calling out," the most popular method for dealing with conflict. Calling out is often used to address interpersonal tensions and behaviours that are out of line with dominant ethos of the group, and the practice is complicated and often produces highly intense results (Wilkinson, 2009). The authors reviewed under the theme of emotional management have pointed out that autonomy-oriented communities face ongoing challenges of "hidden hierarchies"—power constellations around which relationships are organized—and "feeling rules"— cultural expectations around emotional expression and the ranking of some emotions as more important than others. These hierarchies and rules find their way into politics and often work to discipline participants. The prevalent conclusion many authors examining this theme make is that strong affective ties are often seen as crucial for a group's well-being and continuing prosperity, however, these same ties can also work to discipline the group into power dynamics that mirror existing patterns of domination.

The third theme concerns the trope of the "sad militant," a common affective disposition in radical politics (Bobel, 2007). The usefulness of "strong" activist identities has been brought into question in the literature on affect in autonomous social movement theory. Sad militancy goes hand in hand with ideological purity and policing practices of what is known as the "perfect standard" of activism that militancy necessitates. The authors I cite criticize the damaging effects of sad/angry dispositions that embody and propagate oppressive and dominating qualities and relationships found in the dominant order (Bobel, 2007; Chatterton, 2005, 2010; Heckert, 2004; Star, 2006,).

The fourth theme is the common, radical, practice of consensus. Issues around consensus continued to come up through my reading and my interviews (complete results

of which are presented in the next chapter). Consensus can have unintended negative impacts and be used to raze the multiplicity of expressions and their potential articulations which might have otherwise led to something rich and varied (Anonymous, 2000; Bobel, 2007; Chatterton, 2005; Star, 2006; Srivastava, 2006; Wilkinson, 2009)

Theme 1: Emotional sustainability

In autonomy-focused social movement literature, "emotional sustainability" is often written about as an objective that activists should reach for in order to avoid "burn-out" (Brown et al, 2009; Chatterton, 2005; King, 2005). Brown et al. (2009) considered burn-out in autonomous groups and social centers that operated on the basis of anti-capitalist, horizontal, participatory, consensus-based organizing, primarily in Britain. For these authors emotional sustainability "is based in a definition of emotions as having a primary 'set,' which is: hope, fear, humour, happiness, compassion, love, grief, anger, envy, empathy, passion, frustration" (Brown et al, 2009: 3).[50] King (2005) defines "emotional sustainability" as "sustaining the necessary levels of emotional energy required for long-term social change" (King, 2005:151). Simply put, it means that you have a long-term capacity to resist and create. Or, "burn-out," in Brown's definition, is a "state of mental and physical exhaustion brought on by over-work or trauma" (Brown et al., 2009: 3). There are a wide variety of complex reasons for burn-out. For example, Kleres states that it can relate to a movement's defeat and/or the ongoing process of

[50] This grouping of emotions is in line with the dominant ontology found in the biological sciences and influences the idea of sustainability as being able to manage and control our relationship to these "base" and "universal" emotions.

confronting “the unobtainable goals of a movement.” It can also stem from “individuals being shamed or made to feel inferior within a movement” (Kleres, 2005:180).

According to Brown et al, maintaining an oppositional stance (feeling different or apart) and constantly negating the hegemonic norms that permeate a given society, or “opposing the dominant beliefs of a society,” requires a level of energy that exerts continuous emotional pressure on an individual and community (Brown et al, 2009: 5). This constant energy is combined with all of the other demands and feelings that participating in the project of “decolonization of everyday life” is wrought with, making burn-out in radical resistance commonplace.

Kleres also found that burn-out is often directly related to how much meaningful support there is for those who suffer from stress and the tensions of negotiating other commitments alongside activism (Kleres, 2005). Brown et al. argued that one weakness shared by many autonomy-oriented communities is that practices that promote emotional-health and well-being are often lacking. In their study of social centres, they observed that such practices were informal and had uneven results. They say that therapeutic practices, especially those aimed at increasing “happiness” (positive psychology) are crucial to autonomy-oriented movements in particular because “emotions are the glue of solidarity. Glue is even more important in diffuse, horizontal networks in which many participants adhere to unconventional identities and personal/political commitments” (Brown et al, 2009: 7).

In the research I surveyed there is a common assumption that activists need to do something practical to maintain emotional well-being but that “something” was an individual responsibility. In both the literature reviewed here and in my interviews

(presented in the following chapter) there is the indication that it is quite common for autonomy-oriented, mostly settlers, of the global North[51] to become rigid, discouraged, despairing, tired, and or traumatized, and that this leads to burn-out. Burnout in turn leads to "unsustainable" activism—the decomposition of groups, organizations, and movements (Barker, 2008; Chatterton, 2010; Brown et al., 2009).

Another underlying assumption of the inverse relationship between emotional sustainability and burn-out is that collective action needs "positive feelings...because only healthy, happy and motivated people are able to contribute creativity and enthusiasm to a project" (Laughton as cited in Pickerill, 2009: 25). From this perspective, when activists fail to pay attention to maintaining "positive feelings," burn-out becomes inevitable, and the consequences are negative for both the movement and the individual (Brown et al., 2009).

Not surprisingly, the theme of emotional sustainability is often accompanied by examination of emotion management practices—the models and methods used to deal with emotions in activist spaces. For example, according to Brown et al. (2009), King (2005), and Pickerill et al. (2006), some version of "emotional reflexivity" (or emotional management) can help to stave off burn-out. In the following section, I begin by examining "emotional reflexivity" as a practice and then review the studies that address emotional models in autonomy-oriented communities. I conclude the section with a brief examination of the activist custom of "calling out" as a way to deal with interpersonal tensions and "bad" behaviour (Brown et al., 2009; Srivastava, 2006; Wilkinson, 2009).

[51] Interestingly, a number of my interviewees were non-white settlers, however they had accepted the dominant culture within the communities they participated in, which was based on the psychologizing ontology of emotions as the dominant mode of expression and relating.

Theme 2: Emotion management practices

Reflexivity

According to Brown (2007), Brown et al., (2009), Pickerill et al. (2006), King (2005), and Chatterton (2005), emotional reflexivity and emotional sustainability are inextricably linked. Each author argues that if we create space for contemplation of the role of emotions within autonomous activism, keeping a particular focus on sustaining long-term activism, we will make our individual and collective resistance more sustainable over time and fewer people will experience burn-out. Sustainability, King (2005) argues, can be achieved through practices of emotional reflexivity. Emotional reflexivity is defined as follows: being consciously aware of emotions and paying attention to emotions, both individually and collectively (Brown et al., 2009; King, 2005). In other words, the goal is to incorporate what Barker et al. (2008: 433) call "skilful emotional self-management" in activist work.

Emotional reflexivity, as a practice, involves constructing rituals such as mindfulness, Buddhist teachings, and developing skills of meditation, all of which help us to be consciously self-aware of the present moment and of our feelings in the present moment, with the intention to act non-judgementally (Brown et al, 2009; King, 2005). Reflexivity involves "a focus on emotional sustainability, personal reflections and productive participation" (Brown et al, 2009:10). The point is to cultivate the ability to understand our emotional responses and to process them in order to act effectively as an activist. According to Brown et al., many activists have taken "positive steps to address the emotional causes and consequences of burn-out and through emotional reflexivity are

able to re-evaluate how they relate to themselves and other activists" (2009:10). Through these practices of mindfulness,

> "we learn to interpret and name particular bodily experiences as emotions, and the situations and places in which it is appropriate to express these and where we are expected to suppress them. Much of this is learnt in childhood but the learning processes are continuous. Activists will continue to develop their sense of themselves and acquire socialised means of reacting emotionally to the environments in which they find themselves. This socialisation will, of course, be heavily shaped by the habitus of activism" (Brown et al., 2009: 10).

Thus, the practice of emotional reflexivity is reflecting on one's own needs and commitments. Part of this involves (un)learning negative emotional patterns while forging new capacities to know (through mindfulness practices and emotional reflexivity "training") when and how to express the right emotions. Interestingly, Brown et al. point to the process of emotional conditioning but do not question it. In contrast to their understanding, I suggest that the consequences of interpreting and naming bodily experiences as emotions shapes the habitus of activism more than the other way around. That is, instead of viewing the habitus of activism as "acting" on the way in which we express our emotions, a different process is likely at work: the ongoing dominance that a universalizing, essentializing, and psychologizing ontology of emotions has had on our "common sense" way of expressing "personal" emotions shapes both the relations of activism and the design of the models meant to facilitate "healthy" activism, which all preserve and strengthen the dominance of the psychologizing ontology of emotions.

Brown et al. outline several practices that fit in this category of "emotional reflexivity or management." For instance, check-ins and debriefs are practices where activists "create time and places for emotional support." Other related practices include "sharing inter-generational wisdom and knowledge," and "attending to emotions during meetings, constructing collective rituals, and creating conditions where the emotions for protest are re-experienced rather than relying on memories of past actions." All of these practices are assumed to cultivate "reflexivity" (Brown et al., 2009: 10).

Co-counselling, a practice popular in Argentinean autonomy-oriented groups in the late 90s, would also fit this category. It is described by King (2005) as

> "a non-hierarchical space in which activists were able to work through their emotions and thus sustain their activism: they learned to both objectify the emotions and reflect upon them to ensure that the appropriate emotions were displayed: and to subjectively reflect through the emotions to re-create the emotional frames required to sustain their identities as activists" (King, 2005: 152).

King presents co-counselling as a practice that is aimed at clearing the air and keeping the spaces where people live/organize free from tensions that accumulate if left unaddressed. However, he also problematizes the notion of sustainability: he asks, are "individuals who engage in practices of emotional reflexivity more likely to become and remain activists?" (2005: 166).

For me, a more interesting question is why is sustainability valued for its own sake? Also, should we reconsider the assumption that sustainability is always advantageous? We could also ask, is activism only sustainable if one is emotionally

fulfilled? A more deeply rooted question then emerges: can "emotional reflexivity" as a practice reflect on the ontology of emotion itself? These kinds of questions must be asked so that the models themselves become reflexive and subject to scrutiny. In short, the assumptions that underpin these practices require further unpacking.

The notion of emotional reflexivity assumes that emotions are still rooted in the individual as is the responsibility to examine and reconstruct them, even in the practices of co-counselling, the dominant ontology of emotions is present, although it viewed as 'yours' *and* 'mine' to deal with. In other words, the ontology of the dominant discourse on emotions informs this discourse. This goes for the other common models such as let's talk, debriefs and check-ins. They take individual emotions as the center of experience, and the subject's ability to articulate, reflect, process and "deal" is volleyed within the chosen model within which the individual emotions are being tabled.

Let's Talk

Sarita Srivastava's (2006) work looks at what she calls the "let's talk model" (similar to the common practice of "debriefs" or "check-ins") that has the intention of emotionally unpacking problems, or simply doing a review on how everyone is feeling at a particular time.[52] This practice usually involves people sitting in a circle and taking uninterrupted turns expressing themselves by saying how they experienced or feel about a topic or just how they are feeling in general. Srivastava interviewed a broad range of

[52] The models brought up by the participants in my study were variations of the "let's talk model." Debriefs and check-ins were the most popular ways in which emotions were formally dealt with.

feminists involved with anti-racist efforts in 18 Toronto women's organizations[53]. She found that so-called therapeutic models ended up creating tightly controlled spaces and powerful hierarchies along racial, gender, and emotional lines (2006). What emerged were scenarios where certain emotions were valued over others (e.g., sadness over anger). The structured emotional dialogue tended to take a therapeutic tone informed by positive psychology: let's make things better, let's move on, let's let go, let's feel bad, let's feel good, I'm sorry. Srivastava's research reflected on how white women, and their often tearfully-expressed sense of guilt and victimization around being "accused" of racism, had the effect of centering their own experiences and emotions, pointing to a form of emotional discipline that emerges from existing systemic hierarchies of less to more oppressed identities (Srivastava, 2006).

Feeling rules and hidden hierarchies

In the context of let's talk, check-ins, and debriefs, Srivastava's findings echoed research on "feeling rules" mentioned in Chapter 1. Recall that feeling rules are cultural expectations about emotional expression. For instance, the dominant feeling rules of western culture delineate rational men from irrational women, or valorize the "hurt" or "guilt" of white people over angry racialized subjects (Bayard de Volo, 2006; Brown et al, 2009; Holmes, 2004). In relation to hidden hierarchies, they reflect them, and often what plays out through these models tend towards hierarchies that exist in the dominant order.

[53] I cite Srivastava's work here because, although not specific to autonomy-oriented work, it presents practices that are identical and the consequences of these practices in a clear and useful way, some of which are used in work I explore later on (that is specifically autonomy-oriented) but the other works do not explore the terms as thoroughly.

Illustrating the connection between let's talk, debriefs, and check-ins with feeling rules is a relevant investigation into affective ties and practices of autonomy-oriented groups by Eleanor Wilkinson in her article "Queering autonomous social movement practices" (2009). Wilkinson's work gives insight into the emotional spaces of activism, and emotional management, by investigating and problematizing the dominant ways that emotions are dealt with in autonomy-oriented communities in Britain. What Wilkinson found through her investigation was that, in theory, autonomous spaces are attempting to create supportive and inclusive spaces, however, in practice there is little place for conflict or dispute to be dealt with in reparative ways, leading to feelings of exclusion and alienation (Wilkinson, 2009). She levelled several critiques against the practices that exist in these communities to deal with emotions and conflict: hidden hierarchies and feeling rules disciplined the groups' emotional expression; lack of reflexivity about the consequences of normative intimacies and the nuclear relationship; and that consensus was a silencing process. I will review her findings on hidden hierarchies here.

Wilkinson found that hidden hierarchies disciplined spaces emotionally. Members, especially those that lived together, were bound affectively to a political ethos (autonomy), yet the power relations of the group were not horizontal. Rather, power continued to flow around identity categories (e.g., white males dominating the space). She found, echoing the results of others, that "affective ties" work paradoxically to at once create group cohesion and at the same time limit dissent and impose conformity (Anonymous, 2000; Bobel, 2007; Brown, 2007; Chatterton, 2005, 2010; Narayan, 1988; Pickerill et al. 2006; Star, 2006; Wilkinson, 2009). This disciplining informed feeling rules where there was often an implicit delineation on which emotions are relevant to

politics. Several of her interviewees noted the existence of an affectively disciplined space where emotions were ranked and the tone was set by members with the most power (2009:39). Wilkinson concludes that "with positive affective ties comes a fear to speak out of turn or provoke disagreement—strong positive emotions and bonds and sense of belonging might not be beneficial" (2009: 39). This is reminiscent of Srivastava's research outlined above and that of Ahmed (2010) who suggest that what makes a scenario seem "happy" (agreement) is often in part what it conceals or keeps from "view" (Ahmed, 2010: 132).

The "tone" of a space encourages certain emotions to be seen as more important than others, fuelling the formation of "hierarchies of emotions" (Wilkinson, 2009: 36). This is another way of disciplining emotions; they are encouraged to be expressed in a particular way at a particular time, and this implicit or explicit ranking practice leads to subsequent ordering of members according to where their emotions "fit" into this hierarchy. This deterministic conceptualization, that is, that emotions are experienced, defined, and expressed in specific and reified ways, clearly resonates with the way that emotions are conceptualized in the dominant discourse and harkens back to Brown's comments that emotions are shaped by the habitus of activism (2009).

Calling out

Toronto based organizer Asam Ahmad recently wrote an article in *Briarpatch* (March 2, 2015), titled "A note on call-out culture". In it he defines call out

> "culture as the tendency among progressives, radicals, activists, and community organizers to publically name instances or patterns of oppressive behaviour and

> language used by others. People can be called out for statements and actions that are sexist, racist, ableist, and the list goes on". (Ahmad, 2015: para 1)

He then goes on to say that "because call-outs tend to be public, they can enable a particular armchair and academic brand of activism: one in which the act of calling out is seen as an end in itself" (Ahmad, 2015: para 1)

Echoing my participants' observations, and my own personal experiences, Ahmad says that call-outs are "toxic" because by nature they are about public shaming and performance around who is "pure" in their politics, both in speech and action. The problem with call-out culture is that it often distils the complexity of a human being's experiences, location, previous "training" in "activism," education and so on into an action (or series of actions) that are deemed to "pass" or "fail" the test of radical purity. Ahmad says, echoing many of my interviewees (some of whom participated in the same organizing circles as him), "most call-outs I have witnessed immediately render anyone who has committed a perceived wrong as an outside to the community. One action becomes a reason to pass judgement on someone's entire being…" (Ahmad, 2015: para 2). Ahmad articulates one of the key concerns that I have with the disciplinary measures that exist in many radical communities: practices such as "calling out" mirror the dominant culture's approach to crime and punishment; individuals who deviate are to be "disposed" of (Ahmad, 2015, para2).

Not only does call-out culture reflect the worst of "progressive" politics, it shows how little autonomy radical groups have achieved from the dominance of police culture and the harm that comes from identity politics, since peoples "crimes" are often distilled down to identities of privilege (white, cisgender, males, etc.). In the words of Ahmad, "it

means we're treating each other as if our individual social locations *stand in* for the total systems those parts of our identities represent. Individuals become synonymous with systems of oppression, and this can turn systemic analysis into moral judgement. Too often, when it comes to being called out, narrow definitions of a person's identity count for everything" (Ahmad, 2015: para 4). In other words, calling-out is an essentialist approach to conflict. The practice of "calling-out" segues into the next theme of sad militancy. Ahmad declares that "it isn't an exaggeration to say that there is a mild totalitarian undercurrent not just in call-out culture but also in how progressive communities police and define who's *in* and who's *out*" (para 4). As the next section on sad militancy outlines, the "policing" of who is in and who is out is often based on very specific markers, that supposedly reflect a "pure" or "perfect" anti-oppressive politics accompanied with a language that is politically correct with up-to-date terminology and a proficiency in the languages of accountability (which is always changing and unrealistic to keep up with). Gesturing to the figure of the sad militant, policing the boundaries of the radical group with their "proficiency" in language and behaviour, Ahmad asks, "And what happens when someone has mastered proficiency in languages of accountability and then learned to justify all of their actions by falling back on that language? How do we hold people to account who are experts at using anti-oppressive language to justify oppressive behaviour? We don't have a word to describe this kind of perverse exercise of power, despite the fact that it occurs on an almost daily basis in progressive circles. Perhaps we could call it *anti-oppressivism* (Ahmad, para 5). If we take up this term, then the sad militant would certainly be responsible for anti-oppressivism, a problem rampant

in most radical communities I read about and participated in, and corroborated by my interviewees.

Theme 3: Sad militancy

The affective disposition of "sad militant" reflects some of the common challenges faced by autonomy-oriented resistance movements, challenges that overlap with the themes of emotional sustainability and emotion management practices (Bobel, 2007; Chatterton, 2010; Star, 2006). There is real, ongoing, and palpable trauma, sadness, and loss that comes with resistance work, and these affects can permeate an activist disposition. An approach to resistance informed by the culture of militancy often results. Existing and complex performances of patriarchy, whiteness, and machismo usually connect to this disposition (Bobel, 2007). It is compounded and shaped by the insecurity of living in a society where surveillance and police brutality against subversion is real for radical activism, a reality that generates a militant brand of ideological purity, one that is often paranoid and seeks to control a "perfect standard" of activism. The sad militant then works to ensure this standard is met by attempting to gain control over the conditions of radical resistance and preventing spaces becoming infiltrated with capitalist ideology/practices (Kleres, 2005). Attempts to enforce ideological purity are evident in tightly controlled spaces that are policed to different degrees (Bobel, 2007).

Sad militancy—angry and sad affective dispositions that accompany a disciplined standard of what is a real activist should be—has been the subject of several studies (Bobel, 2007; Chatterton, 2010; Heckert, 2002; Holmes, 2004; Star, 2007). According to Chatterton, "through a mixture of fear, guilt, anger, shame, or compassion, activists set

themselves apart from non-activists through their commitment and self-sacrifice to lead social change" (Chatterton, 2006: 270). Although Chatterton's comment refers generally to a delineation of "activist" and "non," he is also referring to how guilt, anger, shame, and fear were affective characteristics of key members of the radical movements he studied and participated in, mostly from fairly homogenous class, race, cultural, and gender specific identities (white, male, middle class, sub-cultural). The disposition is a masculine-gendered performance; activists compete with each other to see who can be most daring and the most militant in demonstrations of mood, dress, and actions. It is a type of macho heroism (without joy), and the sad/angry militant performs a brand of "radicalism" that serves to exclude/negate the complexity of many activists' emotional experiences (Anonymous, 2000; Bobel, 2007).

The products of sad militancy are the creation of feeling rules and hidden hierarchies since spaces/communities that are disciplined by sad militancy are often actively policed to ensure a purity of activism. According to Chatterton, "emotional boundaries" are drawn around what it means to be an activist, and what it should look and feel like. The result is radical purity and the mechanism to achieve it: policing to ensure a "perfect standard" of activist (Chatterton: 2006: 313). However, the decisions as to who is "in" and "out" of activist communities, or what makes "the perfect standard" can often seem random, precarious, and, superficial, as my interviews confirm.

The "perfect standard" is written about by Chatterton (2006), Brown (2007), and (Bobel, 2007), and is generally defined as the requirement for individuals to embody an unyielding level of commitment and sacrifice to a cause while emoting sense of hardship that comes in pursuit of social change. It is expected that activists should demonstrate an

ongoing commitment to resistance (and to being considered "activists") by both living and materially embodying their commitment to the chosen cause/lifestyle. In the case of spaces that are dominated by sad militancy, if you "aren't angry you aren't radical enough or you don't care enough" (Henderson, 2008:34).

Holmes argues that the angry or sad militant disposition is an undeniable and dominant response to perceptions of injustice which takes a punitive approach to activism as "it can fortify resolve to endure in the struggle for accountability" (2004: 35). What Holmes is alluding to is that "the perfect standard" encourages self-identified activists to police the boundaries of their social and political networks by working according to the assumption that there is an ideal identity of resistance (2004). Policing practices of the "perfect standard" are intense and they impact all of the methods, models, and practices of emotional management outlined above. Those against which policing practices are applied often experience guilt, anger, despair, frustration, trauma, and betrayal. Furthermore, Bobel argues that there are undeniable gendered assumptions that underlie this boundary policing, and that both the militancy and the policing are the privilege of men that are accustomed to positions of power and privilege that enable them to easily land in the policing roles, roles informed by patriarchy, militarization, and masculinity (Bobel, 2007: 156). Or, on the flip side of this, others who are not in positions of power can often be recruited, as my interviews point out in the next chapter.

"Feeling rules" facilitate the over-determinations of sad militancy. Affective ties that bind us to communities and spaces can force us to either impose a will to agree, or impose a way to affect that is in line with the overall attitude of the group (Holmes, 2004: 220). Freeman, for example, argues that this subtle policing of autonomy-oriented

political practices often is the product of what she calls the "tyranny of structurelessness" (1972: 160). She argues that as activists strive for horizontality and consensus the result can be a space that is fertile for "survival of the fittest" struggle, making a "radically" open space with no practical guidelines for achieving "emotional liberation" from existing power hierarchies (Freeman, 1972; 160). Likewise, Hetherington argues that when old powers are challenged and transgressed through resistance, new hierarchies often emerge to constrain, control, and "fill" the space affectively (Hetherington, 1997). It can therefore never be a simple (and romantic) case of escaping from society's regimes of emotion by ignoring the emotional power hierarchies that may emerge within alternative spaces (Wilkinson: 2009: 40).

In conclusion, the "perfect standards" of activism are based on expectations that are highly romanticised and impossible to achieve. A popular, anonymously written, polemic titled "Give Up Activism" circulated through western autonomy-oriented communities in the late 1990s criticizing precisely what it called the "activist mentality" (Anonymous, 2000). The polemic argued that the strong "activist" mentality creates a division of labour within which "activists" perceive themselves as specialists in social change (Anonymous, 2000). The emotions associated with this division of labour are intense (and in line with the dominant ontology of emotions) and point to the ongoing issues and tendencies of radical spaces to become identity-driven/obsessed and emotionally disciplined. Hard to acknowledge behaviours such as jealousy, sexism, racism, and judiciousness have no space to be addressed but still appear and dominate, despite their contradictions to broader ethics of anti-capitalism. The possibility of being ousted or turned against creates a climate of self-censorship and self-surveillance where

people manage their emotions to fit with the militant ethos of the group, or else, as one of my interviewees stated you commit "social suicide" (Kim- interviews). People manage and demonstrate their feelings in a way that affectively signals the desired standard, and if you fall "out of line with the affective community" to use the words of Ahmed, you become an "affect alien" (Ahmed, 2010: 126).

Theme 4: The Problem with Consensus

I have drawn heavily on Wilkinson's work because it is autonomy focused but also because it highlights concerns about the validity of consensus-based decision making. A variety of authors interested in affective relationships, such as Ahmed (2004), Srivastava (2006), Manning (2003), Miles (2008) and Henderson (2008) have also offered criticisms regarding the practice of consensus that are not just specific to autonomy. The first two problems I reviewed (hidden-hierarchies and lack of self-reflexivity) in Wilkinson's work on autonomy-oriented communities extend into her critique of consensus. Consensus is about making decisions in autonomy-oriented spaces in order to make sure that everyone has a voice and no one feels left out. In practice, however, the participants interviewed by both Wilkinson (and parallel Srivastava's study), as well as my own participants, articulated again and again that consensus as a practice was not fruitful for complex issues and limited the creative possibility of decisions:

> "It is a good idea but in reality it gets used for day to day tasks, mundane things, like drawing up a new cooking rota, or deciding whose turn it is to clean up after an event… and even these decisions can take fucking ages, so we're hardly going

> to want to suggest that we sit around and discuss the rights and wrongs of hetero-monogamy are we? We'd be there for days!" (Wilkinson, 2009:39).

This excerpt points to the limits of group decision making on complex issues. Furthermore, if dominant personalities are affecting individual's ability (confidence/comfort) to veto, as well as what issues are seen as important to discuss in the first place, "true" consensus (if there is such a thing) is unachievable. For example, in Wilkinson's interviews, one participant argued that issues surrounding sexuality were raised but then dismissed, or, as the above excerpt suggests, the practise of consensus does not take place at all around many non-normative yet politically important topics since, in the case of sexuality, discussions around this made those with normative sexual relations feel uncomfortable.

What Miles called the "fetish of consensus," is a critique of the celebration of collective decision making and the successful settling of disputes (Miles, 2008: 28). In line with this notion, philosopher Erin Manning argues that the logic of consensus-based thinking is a part of the policies and practices of state logic. Consensus is a "flattening" of the potential of the political. It is subject to rehearsal, and it is "mediated by a lack of mediation"; it privileges a logic of agreement and certain exchanges over others while pushing the intelligibility of potential political capacities through an structure that is meant to limit, thus embodying sovereign methods. She argues instead for a politics that is based on a

> "logic of disagreement, of misunderstanding. Words in circulation, gestures in movement: this is an errant politics I seek. The political, in this sense, is not the exercise of power, for in conflating politics and power, we have a tendency to

> confine politics to the state. What is proper to politics is lost if politics is thought as a specific way of living. Politics must therefore not be defined on the basis of a pre-existing subject. Politics must always be in relations" (Manning, 2003: 54).

She goes on to say that this would be, not a politics that values consensus, but

> "A politics of dissensus, where dissensus is not the confrontation between interests or opinions but the manifestation of a limit between one-another. Dissensus is what I must acknowledge when I reach out to touch you. Dissensus rejects any pre-constituted communicative subjectivity, for at the heart of dissensus is the knowledge that I am no more (or less) constituted than is the other who I reach toward. Consensus, on the other hand, is the reduction of politics to the police. Consensus is the end of politics, the silencing of the political, the impossibility of touch, or reciprocity of difference". (Manning, 2003: 54)

Manning's suggestion for a politics of "dissensus" directly relates to taking up a politics of affect as a solution to some of the problems I outlined in this chapter. I will advocate for this shift more in depth in the epilogue of this dissertation, but here I think it is useful to highlight this view of consensus as restraining movements' ability to address complex issues, conflicts, tensions, or any type of complex decisions. Manning argues that consensus superimposes a bond "on the relation between self and other often understood as 'community,' the bond that can be understood as the unspoken pact that polices all relationship, be they those obviously involved in state-centered organizations of those on the fringes of state communities" (Manning, 2003: 34). This is an interesting quote

because it again ties into feeling rules—the affective ties that bind us to communities and spaces can force us to either impose a will to agree, or impose a way to affect that is in line with the overall attitude of the group. I should clarify that the critique of consensus is applied to 'pure' consensus, that is used to make all decisions in a group. There are other models that are more 'mixed' which are not applied to all decision making, all the time.

Several of Wilkinson's interviewees said that in complex contexts (which is arguably most situations, especially those involving conflict) decisions are often made outside of any formal process. In the case of conflict and tensions within groups, ways of dealing with conflict were not often dealt with in a reparative way and were characterized by personal affronts and blame. Wilkinson suggests how hard it is to reflect on the efficacy of consensus in a group where there are hidden hierarchies. In a controlled/disciplined space, making group dynamics visible and subject to change involves exposing power dynamics without an effective model to deal with the very emotions that secure the dynamics, a predicament that leads to conflicts emerging that are judicious and blame-based (defensive and accusatory) rather than about dismantling dynamics that are anti-autonomy oriented (Wilkinson, 2009: 38). In short, Wilkinson found that there were no practices set up to help with group tensions/conflict besides ones that were already ridden with existing politics (Wilkinson, 2009: 39). The common practice of "calling out" used in this regard has unsatisfying results similar to consensus.

Concluding Remarks

The previous chapter on emotions in mainstream social movements showed that the dominant ontology of emotions existed in both the literature and the movements

themselves. I wanted to compare the mainstream literature with what was both written about and found in 'practice' for western autonomy-oriented movements. Given that most autonomy-oriented struggles are centrally focused on creating alternative relationships, compositions, and institutions to those that exist in the dominant order, I was curious to see whether the literature on emotions in autonomy-oriented movements would be a) self-reflexive on the impact of the dominant discourse on emotions and b) whether the autonomy-oriented activists/groups written about would reflect achievements in the area of autonomy from the dominant ontology of emotions . Unfortunately, the literature reflects my interview results (presented in the next chapter-chapter 5), that autonomy from the psychologizing approach to emotions, both in theory and in practice has not be achieved, or even mentioned, for that matter, in the literature and communities that were studied. The literature on emotions in autonomy-oriented struggle presented a picture of the radical left in the West where infighting, strife, and conflict abound in radical political communities, and conflicts often emerge around identity-based and emotionally driven determinations. Capital continues to thrive with the ongoing stabilization of tensions that in-form identity categories and continue to benefit from damaging practices grounded in interpersonal strife, judiciousness, and blame-based conflicts. Likewise, the majority of the literature was also not critical of the dominant ontology of emotions, giving no real critique of 'why' or 'how' the problems talked about by the various individuals and groups in the case studies continued to arise in autonomy-oriented communities.

In conclusion, the way that conflict is dealt with reflects similar assumptions and approaches as those found in the dominant order. In the next chapter, I present my interview results with the hope of deepening our understanding of why this might be the

case, and what kinds of conversations we need to start to unwind these dominant tendencies when relating to one another.

Chapter 5:

Methodology and Interview Results

In order to illustrate the affectual trends and tendencies in western autonomy-oriented organizing, I conducted interviews with 15 autonomy-oriented activists based in Kingston, Ontario. Thus far I explored where affect, emotion, and related concepts such as feeling have been found in the research in mainstream as well as autonomy-oriented movements. In this chapter I juxtapose the theoretical trends explored in earlier chapters with my research findings in order to enhance our understanding of affect and emotion in western-autonomy oriented activism. This chapter begins with a short discussion of some important methodological considerations with regard to the interview process. The bulk of the chapter provides an overview of the results of these interviews, while referencing the theory, case studies, and themes explored in previous chapters.

Methodology

My project takes a qualitative approach that involves applying critical theory on affect and emotion in social movements to the data gathered through interviewing activists both currently and historically involved in autonomy-oriented social movement communities in Kingston, Ontario. This research also has an ethnographic dimension since I have been an autonomy-oriented activist myself, and I occasionally draw on my own experiences to augment the information gathered from the interviews. Pile (2009)

notes that both emotional and affectual geographies[54] are preoccupied with proximate and intimate accounts of situations and events. My dissertation was not focussed on place or space in a theoretical sense, but I was inspired by Pile's formulation and decided to combine participation, observation, and textual analysis so that my method resonates with what both emotional and affectual geographies share as a default methodology, best termed "ethnography", because they deploy variations on participation and observation, and often combine textual analysis of autobiographies with stories witnessing injustice and suffering (Pile, 2009). Therefore, soliciting or discovering the testimony of people's experiences is central to the research of both affect and emotion (Dewsbury, 2003).

Object Domain

The most challenging methodological issue I faced in this research was defining my object domain. Which activists fit the categories "autonomous" or "autonomy oriented?" How do I define who is included or excluded in the category of "autonomous"? What characteristics and practices make my interviewees ideal? To find my method sample, I outlined different practices and characteristics that reflect practices of autonomy, and I gathered participants who identify with these ethical-political commitments through a snowball sample. Of course, this raises issues regarding how these "markers" were chosen and the thorny fact that every methodological choice is also an ethical choice. I designed evaluation criteria with the awareness that there is no clear line that makes someone autonomous (autonomy-oriented) or not. There were two requirements for my participants: 1) favouring prefigurative and non-state politics over

[54] Pile defines affectual and emotional geographies as how emotions, places, and their context are both affected and affect the environment around them (Pile, 2009).

other forms of political action (defined in the section on autonomy chapter 4); and 2) have participated in social movement organizing/communities/groups that self-identify as autonomous, or in other words, participants who self-identify as "autonomy-oriented" and have been "members" of a self-identified autonomous community.

Snowball Sample

I used the snowball method to gather my sample[55]. The participant sample started with three people that I know through autonomy-oriented communities who agreed to be interviewed and to put me in contact with other autonomy-oriented activists. These three individuals belonged to different networks and communities. These three people then connected me to other activists through informal means such as word of mouth (rather than formal channels such as listservs/posters/phone solicitation).

This method had three primary advantages. First, a snowball sample allowed me to tap into networks unknown to me. Second, it increased the chances of locating participants who were sympathetic to the objectives of my project. I acknowledge here that this method might create a "bias", however connection through word of mouth does not mean that people were necessarily "friends" who would feel/respond the same way to my project, but simply that all the participants were connected (or had been) to the relatively small autonomy-oriented organizing networks in Kingston. Lastly and most importantly with respect to research ethics, the snowball method decreases the chances of top-down surveillance. This is an especially important consideration when the focus of

[55] One particular strength of this type of sampling is that specific populations that are sometimes hard to reach can be accessed through the snowball method, and one particular weakness is that the results might not be an accurate reflection of the community since the original subject tends to start a chain of connections that might reflect a particular bias (Heckathorn, 1997)

this research is to support resistance/alternatives to the dominant order. While advertising my research and need for participants may have broadened the pool of potential research subjects, it also would have increased the likelihood of state surveillance.

Minimizing Participant Risks

All of the people that I interviewed were well informed of the risks associated with participation: identification, surveillance, and infiltration. There is a real concern of the possibility of data infiltration. I took a number of steps to protect participants and their anonymity to minimize these risks.

First, to ensure anonymity I did not use real names or names that were usually gender specific. Where locations or other identifying information appeared in interviews, I obscured the content. I did my best to ensure that my interview notes were inaccessible to outsiders; I recorded the interviews digitally and then I encrypted all resulting files on my computer. A component of this process to ensure anonymity was offering the option of *not* using consent forms; many of my participants chose not to sign. I thoroughly explained the process and what it would entail to my participants, and I specified in the consent process how I would ensure anonymity would be maintained.

Data Collection

Data collection for my research includes in-depth interviews and narrative inquiry. Narrative inquiry is the process of gathering information for the purpose of research through storytelling. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) note that "[h]umans are storytelling organisms who, individually and collectively, lead storied lives. Thus, the

study of narrative is the study of the ways humans experience the world" (134). In other words, we understand our lives and our selves through stories (Connelly et.al., 1990, 2000). My questions were based around hearing the stories from people about their experiences in different facets of organizing. This was an important component of my data since the way that people have experienced events will be full of emotional content and insights (Anderson, 1991; Bruner, 1987, 1990, 1994). I looked for common themes between stories, and then I looked for ways in which the themes resonated or reflected the theories and case studies I had examined. I approached the interview process as an open-ended and semi-structured process so that my research could move into unintended areas. My focus was to listen to the stories and to pull out the explanations of the way that affective bonds that comprise the relationship between community members were expressed. I sought to listen to the ways in which emotions have impacted an individual's capacities to act and the connection between the relationships of these emotions to the community.

The results were then categorized using the themes on emotions and autonomy outlined in chapter 3: emotional sustainability, emotional management practices, and sad militancy (I address consensus in the section of sad militancy, since most of the comments from my participants were related to this theme).

Some Challenges on Writing about Emotion and Affect

I became aware of numerous challenges, concerns, and blind spots during the course of my research and data gathering. One difficulty of studying affect and emotions in social movements is that they remain under recognized and under theorized in both the

activist and academic community, even as they have supplied much of the "causal" force behind some of the key mechanisms of social movements identified in recent years (see chapter 2, in particular the section on mainstream social movement theory). In other words, as my research points out, emotions have been employed deterministically in mainstream social movement theory, and the dominant ontology of emotional language is used to express personal motivations as well, giving emotions a causal power, one that overshadows the ineffable aspect to emotions (or the realm of *affect*) and cannot be captured in these understandings. Other researchers have noted the challenges of conducting empirical research on affect and emotions. Pile notes that we should avoid "convert[ing] emotional situations or affectual events into conceptualizations alienated from their grounding in real, vital life" (Pile, 2009:11). But how do I, as a researcher/participant, capture what Burkitt (1996) says is the constant expressive element behind words and thoughts? Perhaps we can boil it down to one simple question: how does one represent affect? If affects are largely non-representational and are not grounded in discourse alone, does one rely on theory to suppose what lies beyond discourse, beyond emotions? But since theory is discursively constructed, the answer is no!

This problem points to the methodological challenge in linking the public expressions and the interior versions of feelings, sensations, and meanings. This includes the connection between private and public displays of emotion, group/individual political actions, and even group/individual dispositions. In other words, several question arise: what is being expressed, how it is being expressed, and by whom? And above all else, which expressions matter for my research?

In short, there is a constant challenge in the process of extracting, discovering, measuring or otherwise recording affect, and then representing it. Salient emotions are difficult to identify except through the very actions they are meant to explain, and even then, identifying emotions is a process that is inevitably subjective. In order to minimize these challenges, I tried to present empirical narratives (through telling quotes), while being aware that this process is does not and cannot involve a **"**bringing to the surface" of complete personal and emotional experiences. Likewise, these narratives are always reflections of a particular context and time wherein the analysis itself, by myself and my participants, changes over time. In other words, all attempts to represent affect will always be incomplete, and all attempts to represent affect will always involve a co-production of truth and knowledge, in this case between my interviewees and myself.

Results

Frequently, my personal experiences as an activist living in and visiting radical communities (including autonomy-oriented communities) echoed those of the people I interviewed. I have felt excited, welcomed, supported, and at home in my orientation towards life in theory but not always in practice. I have also felt vulnerable and mistrustful of people's intentions towards others and myself; I have experienced racism and sexism, and both implicit and explicit disapproval regarding my hedonistic style of life (drinking and doing drugs, acting vulgarly or not politically correct, practicing sexual promiscuity), and I have definitely walked away from groups because of these judgments. In my own experience, particular moral inclinations in groups are often determined by personalities that are joyless and militant. In short, I have personally had very

disheartening experiences in radical, autonomy-oriented organizing. Despite the many moments where I have felt love, support, friendship, and joy, the feeling of vulnerability without trust has been more upsetting and had more complex and lasting effects. Similarly, being recognized as a queer person of colour has been a confusing part of my activist life. These identity categories have paradoxically afforded me the freedom that comes with belonging or having "cred" in radical communities, but they also have generated feelings of discomfort and constraint in that I have also felt pressure to perform these identity categories, that is, to "act out" my identity (radical, queer, racialized, woman) according to scripts that offer "authentic" role playing for each of these identities in a radical context. In other words, I haven't always felt comfortable or authentic operating within these markers (e.g., using frameworks of analysis for situations where race or sex is usually seen as the determining causal/explanatory factor). Furthermore, the constraints and freedoms associated with these markers exemplify for me personally how affect functions to incline us towards performing specific identity categories as defining aspects of "self" that also require (or request) specific emotional patterns, something I address at the end of this chapter.

I have organized the presentation of results in a way that reflects the organization of the literature reviewed in the previous chapter. I have grouped the results around the first three themes—emotional sustainability, emotion management practices, and sad militancy in order to highlight the parallels between the existing literature and my own research. Although it was mentioned several times by my participants, I have intentionally left out the theme of consensus. Generally speaking, the concerns raised regarding consensus were usually related to the theme of the sad militant and related

issues such as “feeling rules” and “hidden hierarchies”, where spaces were disciplined into agreement regarding *how to feel* about a particular topic, person, thing, and that these pressures to conform and emote in particular ways operated in an informal way. I address these issues related to consensus (or reverse consensus) under the theme of the sad militant.

For each theme I also apply theory that I have explored throughout the dissertation on affect and emotion in order to highlight how emotions may be understood and were practiced/performed by my participants (and myself). I conclude this section by drawing out the common thread that runs through the three themes: the plight of identity politics. Here, I reaffirm that existing models and mechanisms for understanding and managing emotions within autonomous movements can have the unintended and paradoxical effect of intensifying relations of domination that autonomy-oriented activism seeks to undermine, while at the same time propagating the dominant discourse of psychologizing emotions (the ontology of which drives these re-intensifications). My summarized interview results echo the existing literature: it is common in radical spaces for power dynamics to emerge that mirror those found in the dominant order, indicating that many of the radical communities that my participants have been connected with have not achieved autonomy in the realm of dealing with strife and difference, or other issues that become wrought with “negative” emotions. Likewise, the models and methods of dealing with emotion, as well as other autonomous practices, such as “calling-out,” have especially damaging reverberations within communities.

Theme 1: Emotional Sustainability

To refresh, in autonomy-focused social movement literature, "emotional sustainability" refers to how collectives and communities maintain emotional well-being in order to continue to have the energy to continue on in organizing and resistance; examples include things like healthy (or at least functional) relationships, or the ability to connect to and attract new recruits. It is often written about as an objective that activists should strive to achieve in order to avoid "burn-out" (Brown et al, 2009; Chatterton, 2006; King, 2005).

One of my participants offered an interesting deviation from the typical way burn-out is discussed in the social movement literature on affect and emotion[56]:

> "Burn out has some bizarre healing component, because you disconnect and drop out. You don't do the "everyday." You close off. It's not good, but it is the crash out from the realities of how draining organizing and resisting is. But you only get there because you are "all out." That's why I don't organize and resist the same as when I was younger…." (John- interviews)

John's quotes point out that the emotional costs of autonomy-oriented politics are substantial and suggests that burn-out is expected or necessary. Most of my interviewees had experienced resistance-related burn-out at some point, and many of them spoke about the necessity to do healing work outside of organizing. But when I asked my participants questions regarding this healing work—where has your healing work been done? What support did you have? How do you sustain yourself? —all of them mentioned activities that were not related to formal activist practices. Jen responded, "I find my need to

[56] All of the quotes, unless otherwise stated, are taken from my interviews.

recharge from activism is found outside of it—yoga, meditation, dancing, pot. I make better choices and let go when I do these things. I feel better about myself.*"* Chris offered a similar response: "Specifically, using art and creativity as a part of self-care, and specifically supporting other people's efforts in self-care. Music in general…. Really, I just wanna make radio (laughs)*."*

For many of my respondents, practices of healing and cultivating good feelings often happened "outside" of activism. Like Jen and Christopher, another participant, Patrick, made this point clear:

> "In my free time from organizing I gravitate towards people who want to have fun—know how to have fun and be joyous. Like, last night I went to a pakora-making party where we just fried vegetables and drank Coronas outside on a lawn—it was amazing, and I want to live in a world where we laugh, where we have empty beer bottles littered on the front lawn and the smells of south Asian cooking wafting through the neighbourhood and not worrying about how I sound or look".

In my own experiences as an activist in autonomous movements, when I would start to feel burned out from organizing, I would find myself spending more and more time with an intentionally chosen community, not necessarily one that I was formally involved with doing organizing. Often in activist communities, I have experienced pressure to constantly be "on," that is, to constantly have political conversations and to demonstrate that one was always living one's politics (in speech, action, appearance, etc.). More often than not when I began to feel drained by activism, I would gravitate towards people who were doing no formal organizing at all, or "real friends" as one of

my participants said (Sara). I would start to recede from organizing and its responsibilities, and begin to party more. In these "non-activist" spaces, I have found myself sharing my feelings in a fluid and open manner, although this fluidity and openness might also be a reflection of the communities in which I chose to unwind. What attracted me to these non-activist spaces was that they were free of the pressures to signify activist purity (e.g., who is a good activist and who isn't). Consequently, I could relax and not feel judged regarding how I acted or what I said.

All of my participants mentioned that the spaces of formal activism can be draining. All of my participants over 30 (8 in total) said that they felt that as they got older, the importance of organizing was less of a priority than the need for looking after themselves and feeling connected in relationships that existed outside of radical political spaces. Patrick's reflection in this regard was resonant with many comments made by older activists in my study:

> "Friendships/community that comes out of activist spaces, but don't reside exclusively in them, have sustained me emotionally as well as activities that don't have to be political, but always are, if they are cool and fun. Art and poetry, dancing, music, having friendships/connections with people from non-activist spaces organizing arts events or family events or fun events and not always talking about /centering around activism is really important for my well being".

Greg said something similar:

> "I left militant radical politics, driven by identity politics, which seem to seep into every space, in order to take care of myself. I think taking care of myself grows the movement. I garden, I fix bikes, I don't care any more about the reward of

thinking so strongly oppositionally. Now I think hey I fixed something or I saved or planted vegetables and my friends got a good meal. These are things that are connected to the everyday experience of being human and are crucial to the movement. Taking care of myself and others in everyday ways is balancing".

Many of my participants acknowledged the importance of taking care of one self and had made commitments to these practices. Yet it is noteworthy that to obtain or strive for "emotional sustainability" they (we) all engaged in practices that are known to transcend the self—dancing, music, meditation, partying, making art, etc.—and participants did not expect to find or experience these self-transcending practices in activist spaces. Transcendence of self as healing work stands in contrast to psychologized therapeutic models which seek the achievement of a "healthy self" through models that deal with identifying and processing emotions as essential components of self which we can be healed from. I engage in a critique of these techniques using Spinozian theory at the end of this section. However, for now, according to my participants and in my own experience, the need to engage in these types of activities points to how the self—the experience of a bounded, distinct, autonomous, centred self—can actually get in the way of experiencing a release from the pressures of radical politics. But a different way to look at this dichotomy between transcending self and achieving the healthy self is that these acts of transcendence (dancing, laughing, dropping pretence, movement, sex, drugs, etc.) are actually *more* radical ways to deal with stress than those offered by therapeutic models (both within and outside of activist circles). In transcendent practices, one actually loosens the "self" from discourses of identity, emotions, and self. In therapeutic practices, one seeks to intensify these determinations. To hearken back to Patrick's

comments: “activities that don’t have to be activist but always are if they are cool and fun.”

Applying Spinoza

There was a sense from many of my participants that emotional sustainability is found by engaging in activities and relationships that generated joyful (or augmenting) feeling *for their own sake.* Theoretically, my interviewees’ reflections on these common healing and transcendent practices, and their relation to formal activist practices, can be examined by returning to Spinoza’s understanding of the creation of both joy and sadness through different “activities”—actions (active affects) and passions (passive affects). Recall, according to Spinoza both joy and sadness depend on whether an activity is either “passive” (passions) or “active” (actions):

Table 1. AFFECTS [Table from Nadler, 2006: 202]

(Changes in an individual’s power or conatus)		
Active affects		Passive affects
(brought about by the individual)		(brought about by external things)
Improvement (in individual’s condition) [Joy]		Improvement [Joy] / Degeneration [Sadness]

As seen in Table 1, if an improvement in our conditions comes about wholly through our own resources via our own knowledge of what is good for us, the transition is the result of active affects, which Spinoza terms "the emotion of activity." The two notions of "activity" among the affects are the difference between active and passive affects or "actions" and "passions" (Spinoza, Ethics, IV, Def 8). In the exercise of an active affect (or actions), "man" is free, he is the master of his affect; in the exercise of a passive affect (passions), "man" is driven, the object of motivations of which he himself is not aware (Spinoza, Ethics, IV, Def 8). Spinoza theorized that passive activities (or affects) led to *diminishing* capacities to act (sadness), and active activities (affects) means an *enhanced* capacity to act (joy)[57]. However, this can be slightly confusing because in the western modern sense, "activity" is usually intended to refer to some kind of action which brings about a change in an existing situation by means of an expenditure of energy, but what Spinoza really means is more the "motivation" of the activity (or, emotion of activity). In other words, the concern for Spinoza would be "what is the motivation of the activity?" This is a concern which is not usually taken into account when discussing "activity" in the western modern sense. In the western sense what is usually taken into account is the *productive* dimension of the activity in a more measurable sense—one is "active" if they are doing activities directed toward an outside goal to be achieved.

In the case of "activism," it is common to be considered "active" in the same way as the western notion of activity/productivity. We are active when we are organizing,

[57] External encounters in Spinoza's theory can result in a joyful "transition" of our conditions; if an improvement in our conditions comes about from it, there is an augmentation of joy. This becomes relevant in our discussion of the sad militant (encounters with the sad militant can propagate sadness or with a joyful person, joy).

studying and writing, building something or engaged in protest, for example. However, Spinoza would likely see this expenditure of energy to meet these ends as *passive* affects because the person is driven by something "outside" of them; they have an ambition, they are striving to attain a tangible objective (in other situations this could be greed, or desire to acquire something material). The "activity" is really a "passivity" (or the action a passion) because the person is *driven* by these passions; the activist is the sufferer of the activity, not the "actor" (Spinoza, 2006). So, one is engaged in *passive* affects if they are undertaking activities directed toward achieving an outside goal. On the other hand, someone who is engaged in "actions" or "active" affects, where the motivation of the "act" is an activity of what Spinoza thought was the activity of the "soul," can only do so under the condition of "inner freedom" (Spinoza, 2006). So, dancing, gardening, meditating, contemplation, partying, body movement, making art, good sex, etc., refer to activities where the *motivation* of the act is to connect or tap into some kind of internal state, or inherent power, regardless of whether any external change is brought about. Energy is not being expended for the achievement of external aims but is rather the activity of the soul, which, according to Spinoza can only be pursued if there is a true independence and freedom (could we say a sense of autonomy?).

It is worth mentioning that there is an undeniable "trendiness" that has emerged in the west around practices like meditation and yoga as effective ways to achieve the healthy, whole, "self." But, if we follow Spinoza's understanding of actions vs. passions, there is nothing inherent about these practices that bring about a sense of health or joy. Rather, it is a non-striving, an absence of motivation to attain something or be motivated by something external. It is a politics of affect wherein active affects, or these soul

"activities," can be seen as a way of cultivating joy motivated by the desire to feel connected, in a non-striving or ambitious way. To "be active" or to engage in actions vs. passions is an/the ethical precept for Spinoza, because to engage in these activities of the soul leads to a condition of joy, which stands in contrast to and might arguably even be unintentionally deintensifying the sadness generated from passive affects.

Theme 2: Emotion Management Practices

Reflexivity

Recall that in chapter 3, I argued that several of the emotional management practices employed in social movements have the unintended consequence of propagating the psychologized approach to emotions. This is seen primarily in the way certain emotions are valued over others, how certain emotional expressions are given more value (feeling rules), and in an overall sense that "happy" equals "healthy", but in a superficial way (Ahmed, 2010). As both Srivastava and Wilkinson's work points out, common emotional management practices reproduce both subtle and not-so-subtle oppressions (along lines of gender, race, class, sexuality, etc.). My research suggests that common "feeling rules" and "hidden hierarchies" evident in the experience of many of my participants who have been involved in the local autonomous activist community in Kingston and beyond lead to an ironic outcome: emotions are dealt with superficially but yet emotions govern spaces.

Jo commented on the superficial way in which emotions are dealt with in autonomous activist communities:

> "I see dealing with emotions at a simplistic, base level in the autonomous communities I've interacted with. There is paradoxically only one right way to act in certain situations, deviating from that behaviour results in basically being removed from the group".

In this case, when I asked about the models and mechanisms that were used Jo offered the following inventory and evaluation:

> "Public shaming statements, calling out, debriefs, check ins. I see those happen within the context of a meeting and those are really hard to pull out a single issue; there is no time or space. Never seen that. Aren't really models of dealing with emotions that are productive—no work within the group that teases out real oppressive interpersonal dynamic shit. So, there needs to be more of a system".

Another participant offered a similar assessment:

> "The usual are check-ins and debriefs, mechanisms of consensus decision making that try to center people's emotions. There are mood minders; they become a part of a process that becomes annoying—mostly by men. There are other things like trigger support, but beyond that there are no practices or mechanisms to deal the everyday feelings of being in a group or living in a community that I know of". (Laurie)

Srivastava's (2006) research on feminist collectives suggests that these activist spaces were often organized around previously existing hierarchies. These conclusions were echoed by some of my participants' experiences:

> "There is a lot of emotional abuse from men in our community, whether it is witnessing it or being on the receiving end of it, not just in relationships but friendships. The community here is choked by whiteness and white experience and collision of those two things—paranoia and lack of understanding experiences of difference—need to be centered and this penetrates all the spaces either subtly or not so subtly". (Laurie)

Kim had similar experiences: "I was groomed by older people in the community on how to be radical, but yet my opinion wasn't groomed to be heard the same ways."

The emotional intensity in these comments is clear. These reflections point to the ongoing formation and propagation of hierarchies that form around identity categories and power constellations found throughout western society. Laurie went on to say that despite

> "the infighting, the shaming, the shit talking, the feeling of despair and hopelessness and the fear and suspicion since we live in a police state, if the option was dropping out of radical politics or staying then I would stay. The negative stuff is self-created and we could have honest conversations about it. My strategy has been to walk away from it, but I know the processes and organizing and structures could change to be more loving and supportive. We can't hold power over each other without pain, and if we can work on dismantling our own oppressive structures, between us, it would be a real game changer for the left".

Laurie's argument is hopeful; if we make changes to how we relate to one another and to the processes and structures by which we manage emotions in radical communities, then the outcomes will be less damaging. However, conversations on the topic of "what needs to change" in radical communities often (in the minds of the majority of my participants) do not even mention emotions, or suggest the required ontological shifts that could unsettle our understanding and experience of "self" and "other." As I have been hoping to show throughout this dissertation, I contend that these shifts are necessary in order to have less damaging outcomes.

Calling out

One of my interviewees offered a good definition of calling out: "sometimes confronting a person with a particular behaviour that is counter productive/objectionable to the ethos of space/group or who is behaving in a way that would make someone else uncomfortable. It is used in an activist space/context with the intention of correcting that behaviour" (Paul). Paul goes on to say, "depending on the level of experience and compassion of the person, 'calling out' the objectionable behaviour can close the person off, make them defensive or not able to accept the feedback, or if done carefully, can have the intended result of modifying behaviour and productively making the space less tense again". Ideally then, calling out would be an effective way of addressing a behaviour or action that is causing unintentional harm to an individual or to the group, with the intent to educate the transgressor and shape his or her behaviour.

Some of my participants admitted that they have been called out and that the experience was helpful: "I have had good experiences of being compassionately

reminded to be more careful—I have been receptive. Discomfort is different than defensiveness and if done right, you will feel discomfort, which you can learn from if supported" (Craig). Likewise, Rachel said, "I have found emotions—particularly openness, kindness, and love—to be constructive in my own learning and in teaching others. Calling out can be useful sometimes and sometimes it has been good for me. When done with love I say, 'oh I didn't realize' but most times I find it jarring when it comes from people I don't know or without love". Jim said, "If I have a problem with someone, I don't ever call them out in front of others. I have been shamed in a disciplinary fashion my whole life and it doesn't foster an ideal place to learn and integrate from. I find talking to them later by ourselves, if possible, is better for my well being and mental health".

Unfortunately, calling out, because it is often based on confrontation and public shaming, many times precludes relating to others in a compassionate way, despite the possibility that better results can be achieved through compassion. Sara made this point when distinguishing "calling out" from "calling in"[58] :

> "There are good ideas about additional check ins and calling in vs. calling out, that is, calling out someone unless you have the emotional energy to deal with them in a compassionate way shouldn't be done, because otherwise you are basically kicking them out. Calling out vs. calling in is basically a confrontation vs. conversation difference and the difference each style yields is based on the method".

[58] Calling in is taking the time to educate someone with compassion who is acting in a way that is out of line with the ethos of the group. It is done with the aim of educating, clearing the air, but also welcoming the person to take time to process the feedback and integrate it with assistance by the community or members of the community.

Another participant agreed: “I tend to avoid direct conflict, direct calling out. I just don’t think it works most of the time unless people are friends” (Ann). The dark side of “calling out” was brought up in each of the 15 interviews I conducted. Laura summarizes well some of the negative consequences of the practice: “In all the rad groups I have been with there have been certain degrees of space policing or intentionally excluding others—the whole calling out process could use some work. There is a lot of shaming as punishment… it does harm and those who drive the policing never seem to get called out”.

As discussed in chapter 3 Asam Ahmad (2015) offers a trenchant critique of call out culture in Toronto and noted that the calling out process is usually not done with care. Several of my participants described how this lack of care in the process is manifest in confrontation, shaming, and punishment, which only work to diminish receptiveness and increase defensiveness. Ann observed that

> “someone investigating a calling out process can take a more punitive or shaming approach in their language. You only have so much time. Do you want to prepare, tell, then spend an hour guiding them through their discomfort so that it is a positive learning experience? More time could be spent. Or if someone isn’t able to be compassionate, then they perhaps could not do the confrontation”.

The intention to educate fellow activists on damaging speech and behaviour is often lost in sadness and ill feelings. Christopher describes the fallout:

> “emotional stuff that is attached to calling-out is super intense. A lot of people have become disenfranchised and leave due to the constant policing. People I don’t think should most of the time. That is the problem…there is no process and

> I have known people to do community accountability processes, but we don't know what we are doing. But we aren't building up our knowledge of the processes before the things happen. It ends up being a disaster because people are reactionary. Trauma support is absent and we don't know how to deal with it. But there are lots of less extreme examples where the stakes are lower but it is still an experiment, and someone's life shouldn't be the butt of a radical experiment in behaviour modification".

Christopher reminds us that calling out can become a judgmental and punitive approach to behaviour modification that does not fit with the autonomy-oriented ethos of the group.

The affective toll that calling out takes was palpable for my participants, and often their experiences of calling out was related to themes that I cannot wholly explore but have hopefully touched upon sufficiently when naming the endemic problems in radical left organizing: in-fighting, hidden hierarchies, peer-to-peer policing, and punitive practices that left my participants feeling insecure. James said with sadness,

> "As a white guy having been called out in an unloving way, you are never completely comfortable. You are always being evaluated and can't slip up with your words, or thoughts or actions, or else you are just that fucking oppressive white guy. There is an unforgivingness towards me because I represent whiteness, and I should know better since I am here. And I shouldn't feel bad about it because then it's white guilt and that's punishable too because then it is all about me acting like the victim. With support, I have dealt with the despair that comes from the losses we have all experienced together in radical organizing, but it is way harder and more stressful to deal with being turned against. I have lived through that and I have a constant insecurity and fear I might be ousted or shamed. I am constantly watching myself".

These depleting feelings emerged frequently in my interviews in relation to the practice of calling out, especially when it was done without care or love. Other respondents' spoke of feeling infantilized, feeling not cared about as a person, and feeling intentionally harmed. These feelings leave people drained, traumatized, depressed, and unmotivated to continue activist work. Many of these conversations were haunted by a recurring figure—the "sad militant." But before I turn to another discussion on sad militancy based on my interview results, I want to highlight how the emotional management practices that my participants brought up reflect the dominant ontology of psychologizing emotions, and that this ontology propels conflict-based interactions.

Applying Theory on the Psychologizing Discourse of Emotions

The formal practices that my participants have used to resolve conflict, address "bad-behaviour" or seek to contribute to emotional health and well-being include check-ins, debriefs, let's talk, reflexivity, calling-out. These practices are based on a very particular affectual understanding of "self" (the ontology of the centered subject). Recall how Slyvia Wynter's work, for example, points out how we shape and articulate our relationships are inextricably linked to projects of colonialism and neoliberal discourses of governmentality (Wynter, 2015). Connected to these inclinations is the dependence that both positive psychology and the self-help market have on western notions of subjectivity, both of which are grounded in the ontology of the essential self that Wynter describes. These discourses shape our understanding of how to emote in western cultures by structuring the way we understand, express, and treat emotions; this western biocentric model of humanness affectually inclines us towards a sense of self that is productive of

hyper-individuality, universality, competition, and in general propagates a disconnect between the relationship of intimate experiences and broader power dynamics (Ahmed, 2004a, 2004b; Brennan, 2004; Cvetkovitch, 2012; Ngai, 2005; Probyn, 2005; Stewart: 2007; Srivastava, 2006; Wynter; 2015).

The first component of this psychologizing ontology that was apparent in the experiences of my participants was one of hyper-individualism. When someone was thought to have behaved badly or unjustly, the way that the person was dealt with was based on a system of individual reward and punishment (and a victim vs. perpetrator frame). In this perspective, emotions are contained in a subject and belong to them; they are identifiable, nameable, and treatable; they are *my* or *your* responsibility. Consequently, as my interviews exhibit, these assumptions can lead to profoundly conservative positions (shaming, ousting, gossip-mongering, excommunicating). Hyper individuality and hyper management of emotions creates a culture which aims to understand, identify, and take responsibility for one's emotions—the same logic said to lead to success in a capitalist society. In each case, individuals are training themselves to manage their emotions to become better employers, spouses, subjects (Ahmed, 2010). In short, there is no context in which "calling out" is separate from blame-based ways of dealing with personal emotions, which highlights assumptions of hyper-individuality. It is based on the notion of a centered subject that can be held accountable for its actions and behaviours independent of broader contexts and then punished accordingly, individually. It is the same juridical approach to behaviour that grounds the mainstream criminal justice system, and the practice of calling-out (especially), shores up the exploitative and

alienating nature that a system of rewards and punishments generates, which is based on assumption of individual responsibility (Ahmad, 2015, para. 3).

Another dimension of the psychologizing ontology that is apparent here is the assumption that there is a universality to emotions. In chapter 1, I noted that during the 1960s and 70s the psychologized approach to emotions argued that *all* emotions were nameable, predictable, universal, and limited in their range. The typical list of emotional "states" included anger, fear, happiness, sadness, shame, guilt, regret, and usually also included moods like miserable, elated, bored, or just "good" or "bad" (Cvetkovitch, 2003). When my participants talked about both their emotions and those of others, or the generation of feelings that came out of certain experiences, these emotions were understood and articulated according to the dominant "typology" based on the universality of emotions. This is not to say that my participants did not have *complex* and *dynamic* affective experiences, but the articulation of these experiences was filtered through the typical discourse of good vs. bad and negative vs. positive emotions. As well, the range of emotions described in my interviews tended to be constrained to those found on the standardized list. These trends reveal how the dominant psychologized approach to emotions prevails when autonomous activists understand and relate their affectual experiences. For them, it was 'normal' to engage in dialogues that took for granted (by me and my interviewees) that a) what they *meant* by "sad," "upset," "angry," or "shamed," for instance, signified the same thing to me as it did for them. Moreover, my interviewees assumed that their experiences were channelled through the "typical" list of universal emotions, that is, assumed that their experiences *could* be channelled through these words. My participants abided by the notion of a centered subject who experiences

emotions contained within their "person" and their "body," and the range of expressed emotions remained within the list Ekman et al. contend are universal to all humans (Ekman, 1972).

A final example that points to the dominant psychologizing ontology at work with my participants is the absence of connection between the affective experiences and a broader context.[59] It did not occur to any of my interviewees that their experiences of emotions and the conflicts in which they emerged might be adaptations to a violent and oppressive system of exploitation. Rather, all my participants viewed their emotions and the conflicts as personal and interpersonal. This is not to say that there were not critiques of whiteness, patriarchy, sexism, and other exploitative and oppressive systems, but these were not extended into the intimate sphere of how the conflicts played out, how and why they emerged, and whether they informed the intimate *responses* to events. Rather, these oppressive systems were seen as causal to the behaviour of "perpetrators", but not as causal/a variable to the responses/readings/experiences of events (or, for example, shaping of perspectives that there was a "perpetrator" vs. "victim" to begin with).

A way to illustrate the relationship between the "individual" responses and broader political context is by returning to an example examined in chapter 2. Recall the popular "emotional" model, the Profile of Non Verbal Sensitivity (PONS), developed by the psychologist Robert Rosenthal and his colleagues (1979). They developed the test to measure the ability to recognize emotions expressed in facial expressions, bodily movements, and vocal cues. The results of the test are said to gauge your emotional sensitivity. The test was challenged by Snodgrass (1985) who argued that because women

[59] Of course, hyper individuality, universality, and lack of context all work in concert with neoliberal values.

tended to score higher on non-verbal sensitivity than men, with the conclusion being that women have some innate ability to sense emotions ("women's intuition"), the findings propagated existing gender stereotypes. She offered a more nuanced examination of the relationship between non-verbal cues and power dynamics. Her results showed that across the board, in relationships with unequal power structures, the person with less power was able to better recognize the leader's non-verbal signs. This study sheds light on the connection between individual experiences of emotion and broader systems of power. Snodgrass's research shows that "normal" emotional responses that appear on the surface to be "subjective" or "contained" or "contextual" are actually bound up with relations of power rather than being the "natural" response of individuals. That is, broader power relationships and structures condition our affectual responses and how we read the responses of others, or are disciplined by them (in short, they alter our behaviour). Another way to say this is that the manner in which power is distributed will emerge in our intimate responses and power *conditions* the very *mechanisms* of response- by this I mean the process of recognizing, labelling, and identifying sensations on the body that are articulated as such and such emotion. Likewise, the flow of power tends to flow "downward" from the strong affective personalities at the "top" of the hierarchy. Many of the situations that my participants described relate to these hidden hierarchies and to the haunting figure of the sad militant[60].

[60] Using Spinoza, I analyze the notion of dominant affective personalities such as the sad militant at the end of the next section.

Theme 3: Sad Militancy

The decisions as to who is "in" and "out" of activist communities can often seem random, precarious, and superficial, as my interviews confirm. The decision-making process, especially with respect to those who get "called-out" and those who do not, is often greatly influenced by dominant members of communities. One of the personality types that is discussed by academics/activists, and which dominates radical communities, is the sad/angry militant (Anonymous, 2000; Brown, 2007; Bobel, 2007; Chatterton, 2006, 2010; Narayan, 1988; Pickerill et al. 2006; Star, 2006; Wilkinson, 2009).

These personalities figured prominently in my interviews. For example, Dawn offered this assessment:

> "The people who are in the in-circle and pure enough are in the white, middle class, able bodied or some intersection, and are the ones that stick around and control the space. Others can't stick it out because they are oppressed in the very space they came to escape oppression. People who don't speak the radical language can't stay. People who don't pass don't stay. People who signify anything but radical can't stay. Kicking people out is okay. Are we trying to live in a fucking Amish commune? Or with others from a range of different places with real complex identities that express both oppression and privilege?"

The theme of privileged insiders came up several times when participants were asked about their experiences with sad militancy. Many of my participants shared stories about the people being ousted from groups with decisions being made "behind closed doors."

> "Convo's were around men. When they ousted X it was just another example of a long lasting patriarchal relationship rolling out in a patriarchal way. That still

> happens. I was asked to choose sides—another fall out. My overwhelming feelings when X was ousted was this is a white and patriarchal move and there are emotional patterns associated with these moves like heteronormativity as well as patriarchal understandings of dissent. I had to get on side or suffer. Either way I would suffer". (Russel)

Even in a context when a problematic person (accused of abuse) should have been excluded, according to Laurie,

> "the idea was right, but the process was a disaster and it manifest as an intense clamp down where no one was allowed out, or in it felt like, and it was dictated by one person, really. You had to see things black and white. You had to be pure in your perspective and there was no empathy allowed. It was a classic example of how fear and paranoia has informed our practices".

Laurie's comments underline an important aspect of sad militancy—puritanical ideology. Puritanism is a way of relating to others and organizing resistance that, as Laurie mentions above, negates or ignores the complicated webs of privilege and oppression that overlap in people's identity categories. The puritanism of sad militancy resonates strongly with the "perfect standard" of activism (discussed in Chapter 4), which imagines the "real" radical activist as one who not only reflects an unyielding commitment to the cause, but is also possessed by perpetual anger so as to signify this commitment. One radiates anger as if to say, if you are not angry, you are not radical enough, or you do not care enough (Henderson, 2008:34). For Jim this plays out in very harmful ways:

> "[Sad] militants really don't want cohesions; they don't trust you if you are willing to work with the existing governance structure. For me that's it. There is a left that will work with the existing governance structure and a left that won't. The radical left won't. I consider myself radical and yet I would. This is a big schism, and it is really hard to overcome. I simply don't belong. But, I have an oppressed identity category so I am not really treated badly or called-out, I just don't belong or agree with certain black or white tactics".

Holmes argues that the sad militant disposition is an undeniable and dominant response to perceptions of injustice which takes a punitive approach to activism as "it can fortify resolve to endure in the struggle for accountability" (2004: 35). Holmes suggests this disposition encourages self-identified activists to police the boundaries of their social and political networks based on the assumption that there is an ideal identity of resistance. Policing practices of this "perfect standard" of activism are intense, and they impact each of the methods, models, and practices of emotional management outlined above. Those against which such policing practices are applied often experience guilt, anger, despair, frustration, trauma, and betrayal. Furthermore, Bobel (2007) argues that there are undeniable gendered assumptions that underlie this boundary policing, and that both the militancy and the policing are the privilege of men who are accustomed to positions of power and privilege that enable them to easily land in policing roles. These roles are informed by patriarchy, militarization, and masculinity (Bobel, 2007: 156).

As noted above, the process of boundary maintenance and policing conducted by sad militants is also often bound up with aggressive forms of calling out. My research showed that both boundary policing and vilification are common practices:

> "once a vilification happens, it is hard to turn back. Something fucked up always happens and it starts behind closed doors. People have the right to, but the showdowns and the ousting in communities doesn't happen in the grave situations; those are exceptions actually; the ousting and vilification happens in the norm, in situations that could have been repaired. Or judgements towards potential allies based on lack of purity. There is no process". (Patrick)

And the process of aggressive calling out can be used by dominating individuals to recruit those not in positions of power, as Kim attests: "The calling out situation in most rad organizing is policing, a path for people who feel disempowered to get power" (Kim). Methods of policing range from peer-to-peer surveillance (keeping tabs on people's activities both formally and informally), call-outs (exposing people for behaviours that are not up to the standard in the past or present), shaming and bullying (shutting people out through direct or indirect means), excommunicating and ousting (removing or forcing someone out of a space because they are no longer deemed fit to participate) (Bobel, 2007; Chatterton, 2006, 2010; Heckert, 2004; Star, 2007).

It is overwhelming how many of these aggressive situations were actually a normal part of organizing for nearly all my participants. All 15 of them (as well as in my own experiences) had either being a part of or known of situations of ousting, calling out, or public shaming that happened in situations that were not "serious," or as Patrick said above "situations that could have been repaired" and were the "norm." That is, while

these behaviours needed to be addressed because they were not cohesive with the ethos of the group, they were not extreme behaviours according to my participants. In fact, ironically the process itself had extreme and destructive results that were way out of proportion with the behaviour. The sadness (in Spinozan terms is the reduction of activists' capacity to act) that resulted from these militant encounters then reverberated beyond the situations.

An anecdote offered by Jo is telling of how destructive the fallout can be from sad militancy:

> "I saw a friend be asked to leave, basically, because their ideas were not pure. I was fuelled by anger and righteous indignation. I have been very close with this space for years. To see it turn into a puritan ideological space was heartbreaking. I didn't feel safe or comfortable there anymore. It was like losing a space that was inclusive. No more space. It is still there but I won't spend time there. There is no opportunity to patch that up. It was too messy, too destructive. Because puritanism rules. What kind of mechanism would patch that up? It's too late".

When I asked respondents to offer some of the darkest practices of autonomy-oriented organizing, some of the key words in response included:

> "bullying, alienation, pride, insecurity, immaturity, stagnation and divisions" (Laurie)
>
> "shaming and punishing" (Bob)
>
> "shaming" (Patrick)
>
> "factions that refuse to talk to each other" (James)

"falling outs and in-fighting" (Jim)

"shaming" (Dawn)

"policing" (Craig)

"Shaming" (Jen)

"In fighting" (Chris)

Two of my participants (Rachel and Kim) used "gloom and doom" to talk about an energy that surrounds certain people in organizing. When asked to expand on the description of the "gloom and doom", Rachel responded:

> "There is drama shit everywhere in rad politics. There is no concillory tone to disagreement. It's hurt people hurting people. Diversity of tactics gets thrown around, but if you are actually sympathetic to people working with the establishment for change, you are going to be hated, or if you want to see someone beyond what they did wrong, you are not aware of your own privilege and a sympathizer. Unless you have a dominating or an oppressed identity, like me, then you have immunity. Otherwise you are constantly trying to be radical enough". (Rachel).

These negative experiences left lasting scars on most of my interviewees. Sadly, these scars were evident even when my participants were asked to relate positive experiences, suggesting that the painful and damaging aspects of autonomous politics that people had experienced were much more dramatic and long lasting. Dawn sums it up nicely when she said

> "the left in this town is divided and smug about it. Here there is really is no autonomy movement, because if you were really autonomy oriented you wouldn't

> be an asshole. I have seen a lot of people use their understanding of anti-oppression and anti-oppression politics to ruin people's lives or have them ousted. People also play their oppressed identity card a lot. If we treat someone with a more oppressed identity as though they can't be held accountable for harmful behaviour, this is itself not treating someone humanly, and that is oppressive. And on and on".

Again, that these experiences were fairly normal for most of my participants is also disheartening. While the spaces, places, and people varied, the general sentiments and unfolding dramas were an ordinary part of organizing in autonomous groups and communities. That is, infighting was commonplace, feelings of betrayal and alienation were accompanied by stories of policing, and many people told stories about how resistance efforts/movements/spaces were organized around particular dominating members (sad militants).

Spinoza and Sad Militancy

What affective processes are at work in to incline a person towards "sad militancy?" Spinoza can help us in this regard. It is important to remember the way that Spinoza articulates the porous quality of subjectivity (there is no "within" vs. "without" of subjectivity):

> *L'affect* (Spinoza's affectus) is an ability to affect and be affected. It is a prespersonal intensity corresponding to the passage from one experiential state of the body to another and implying an augmentation or diminution in that body's capacity to act. *L'affection* (Spinoza's affection) in each such state [is] considered

> as an encounter between the affected body and a second, affecting body (Massumi, 1987: xvi).

Tied into this definition of *affectus*, is Spinoza's acknowledgement that our feelings and emotions are conditioned/affected by broader systems. We are affected by encounters/events, and Spinoza uses the term "joy" to describe encounters that increase our capacities to act, and "sadness" when the results are reversed (or "augmentation" and "diminution" put forth by Brian Massumi).

The sad militant can also be understood via the distinction between passions and actions (or active vs. passive affects) summarized above. Spinoza suggests that we are also passively affected by encounters or compositions. Passive affects, or passions, result in "transitions" in our conditions, which when someone is obsessed by the object of their motivations, they may not be fully aware of what drives them (e.g., greed, envy, jealousy, and blind ambition). In these instances, passions diminish our capacities to act (sadness). One dimension of this distinction between passions and actions is the motivation that we have towards an activity. Recall that being "driven" or "passionate" about something outside of oneself would, according to Spinoza, lead to sadness because one was not an "actor" but a victim of their "passion." However, the passive dimension of the affect of the encounters is either sadness as opposed to joy. Spinoza suggests "the passions are all functions of the ways in which external things affect our powers or capacities," in other words, if we have diminishing encounters, we can be affected in a diminishing way, and we can then propagate and embody that change in affect (we can spread sadness, in this case) (Nadler, 2006: 235).

The sad militant is driven by passions. In my research, interviews, and experience, the people who engaged in boundary policing, judging the "perfect standard" of activism, and driving situations of ousting and ex-communicating were people who were most obsessed and preoccupied with ideological purity. Literally, they were driven by trying to keep out capitalism and oppression in all its forms. These obsessions continued to intensify their sense of sadness. Worse still, the hegemony of exploitative power relations *wants* to organize affective experiences in a particular way which limits the ability to feel something other than a narrow grouping of predetermined emotions and diminishes the capacity to articulate and express sensory experience in more creative ways. Thus, the capacity to act in different encounters with other bodies is diminished, and, in short, other possibilities of expressing and articulating sensory experience in the everyday may be creatively obscured, "diminished," or even become hopeless (Massumi, 2002). This is true then for the sad militant who tends towards diminishing or sad passions as well, resulting in proliferating encounters with other bodies that tend to diminish capacities to act.

Applying the Autonomous Marxist Concept of Affective Labour

The autonomist Marxist understanding of "affective labour" can also be creatively applied to the figure of the sad militant. As the social factory becomes hegemonic, there is a reduction in the size of the industrial work force (in the North) and a concurrent expansion of what autonomists refer to as "immaterial labour" (Hardt & Negri, 2000, Lazzarato, 1996). "Affective labour" is a key component of immaterial labour. It is a term used to specify the aspect of immaterial labour that involves the production and

manipulation of affect in order to facilitate specific feelings of well-being, desire, etc. Some examples of affective labour are the work of care provided by healthcare professionals (e.g., nurses), the erotic labour of sex workers, performances of excitement and joy by food industry service staff, advertisers' cultivation and channelling of desire, etc. According to Dyer-Witherford (1999), "the activities of people not just as workers but as students, consumers, shoppers, and television viewers are now directly integrated into the production process" (80). I want to argue that anti-capitalist work has a dimension of affective labour[61]. While obviously intended to resist capitalism, some anti-capitalist work is actually reproductive of capitalism. Anti-capitalist resistance that produces and manipulates affect in a detrimental way, through harming oneself and fellow activists (e.g., through fracturing, calling out, excommunicating, identity based-conflicts, burnout related to lack of support/in-fighting, etc.) is affective labour in the sense that it is productive of capitalism. The more fractured and damaged the left is, the less linkages, affinities, care, support, and community there is, and the weaker and less joyful the resistance spirit becomes. That these depletions are often the case within leftist communities reflects how capitalism has expanded into our very ways of relating/disconnecting to one another.

Concluding thoughts

When I asked my final question to participants— "what does capitalism feel like"? —Jo answered: "Insecure." The question elicited similar responses from other

[61] I want to acknowledge my stretching of this concept. Affective labour highlights the production of surplus value via the use of affects. I am stretching the meaning a bit just to include the shoring up of capitalist relations that then feed into the affects that are in capitals interest.

interviewees: “suffocating,” “vulnerable,” “defenseless,” “like I am drowning,” “exposed,” “hopeless.” It is interesting to note the resonance with Jo’s response when I asked to describe her disheartening experience of organizing: “A constant feeling of insecurity.” What I want to highlight with these examples is that the feelings associated with capitalism were all the prevalent feelings associated with the dark side of radical organizing. These feelings were tied to strife and pain within communities and always involving the evidence of a persisting, overlapping, and significant problem, which is that (re) surfacing tensions and injustices experienced between “self” and “other” and “individual” and “collective” are not being transmuted appropriately in line with the ethos of autonomy. Emotions are personal, autobiographical, and inextricably tied to notions of the centered self, which is the core of individuality and the driving force of identity-related politics. It is the relationship between an essentialized notion of self that creates the possibility of identity categories at all, and these are not simply natural, as I outlined in Chapter 2; they have been enforced and defined through various exploitative discourses (Illouz, 2007).

There are arguable limits on the reach of my work because I spoke to a relatively small number of people in a small city Canada. On one hand this makes it difficult to draw broad conclusions that extend beyond this context, but on the other hand despite my sample size, and the size of the city, my participants had all done activism in a wide range of places and spaces, and they all mentioned the same problems about organizing in the radical left that the literature that I surveyed did: in-fighting, some version of hidden hierarchies, peer-to-peer policing, and punitive practices (such as calling out) that left them feeling insecure (even if they were a part of the practices). Thus, despite the sample

size and city size (although for a small city this was an accurate proportion of the radical left community), my research is able to be connected to broader, existing research on western radical left organizing, as well as be compared to other smaller cities and their radical left "scenes".

My research has shown that the models and practices used to deal with emotions and related tensions emerge from an ontology that assumes a dominant psychologized approach to emotions, and the common ways of dealing with "bad" behaviour are judgmental processes that are also personal, individualized, highly emotional and blame-centered (i.e. a "bad" behaviour leads to interpretation of a bad *person)*. This is also a managerial approach to emotions. A managerial approach smacks of strategies of governmentality and the emotional regulation necessary for the productive subject of capitalism. I am suggesting that not only do these practices fall short of anything that could be viewed as autonomy-oriented (i.e., a resistance to the dominant order driven by an ethic of anti-oppression (pro-joy?)) but that they *intensify* capitalism and colonialism.

If these popularized models of apprehending emotions condition us in a way that is amenable to capitalism, how can we challenge these very intimate ways of articulating ourselves?[62] Throughout my work I brought up Sara Ahmed's claim that "emotions are bound up with the securing of social hierarchy" (2004b: 4) and I showed that the securing

[62] This is not to say that I am discounting the notion of extreme emotional complexes and/or personality problems as the product of biochemical imbalances or processes of socialization that might best be treated through medication. Rather, there is little to no attention paid to the broader political, cultural, and economic context in which this mode of relating to self and others arises. It is important to consider that *how* we feel and *how* and *why* we express certain feelings at certain times are relatively narrow scripts given to us from a dominant model, located within a dominant order, one that benefits from emotionally regulated subjects. Part of resistance work then would be dislodging feelings and their expression from any relation to these prescriptions, and creatively conceptualizing alternative anti- "psy" expressions of feeling, that in Spinoza's words "affect our capacities" in a way that is productive of sadness (Ahmed, 2004a, 2004b; Berlant, 2011; Cvetkovitch, 2012).

of this hierarchy is grounded in the dominant ontology of emotions (and humanism), which underwrites many of our attachments, and informs models, mechanisms, and maps on how to regulate our emotional "selves" in favour of a very particular socio economic system. These tendencies are affective, and in line with Ahmed's claim, how we might "escape" from sad and exploitative affects and their resulting harm would mean to also look to affect as a way "out", or, in the words of Massumi, to expand our "affective potential" in a different way than the current inclinations towards identity politics (Massumi, 2015:36). In the final chapter, to which I turn now, I venture to have a practical and hopeful discussion that comes out of the argument I have made that capitalism continues to thrive with the ongoing stabilization of tensions that in-form identity categories and continue to benefit from damaging practices grounded in interpersonal strife, judiciousness, and blame-based conflicts.

Epilogue:

Affectively Inclined Towards Identity Politics

In this conclusion I want to briefly discuss and summarize the relationship between affect and the inclinations towards identity politics in western contexts, before moving towards a conversation about potential strategies and where to look for hope in autonomy-oriented organizing in the West.

Capitalism and Identity Politics

I stated in the introduction that my investigation was propelled by the following question: to what extent have anglophone, western-based, autonomy-oriented social movements reproduced understandings of affect/emotions/feelings that underwrite the social order they are working against, and to what extent does this reproduction limit the ability of these movements to achieve a relative autonomy? As I wrote on emotions vs. affect in the context of radical organizing in the West, a more clearly stated version of these questions emerged: "how are our emotions conditioned by capitalism?". The answers were found in the theory I presented on the way that capitalism shapes specific modes of identity production. The theory I engaged with conveys how the power of capitalism requires a constant (re)making and strengthening of modes of identity construction that are antagonistic to each other, and in-forming[63] these antagonisms are

[63] To refresh, the term 'in-form' refers to the multiplicity of processes that form human beings into capitalist subjects, that shape and incline our affective lives towards imperatives that are supportive of relationships required for the ongoing functioning of capitalism (Massumi, 2015).

psychologizing emotional scripts which have pacifying affects on subversion.[64] The affects of these discourses are the rigidities of identity-based interactions which are essentialized, individualized, and highly regulated. These ossified interactions then support the very values and interests of an oppressive system from which activists seek autonomy. In this sense, we are engaged in "affective labour" that is productive of capitalism (Ahmed, 2004b).

Linked to this idea, Massumi astutely notes that "the product, ultimately, is us. We are in-formed by capitalist powers of production. Our whole life becomes a 'capitalist tool'—our vitality, our affective capacities. It's to the point that our life potentials are indistinguishable from capitalist forces of production" (Massumi, 2015, 36). Massumi calls this the "subsumption of life" under capitalism.[65] Massumi interestingly expands upon this idea from Marx by suggesting that human affect has been seized upon and reshaped in capital's image, ultimately for the goal of maximizing surplus value. In the example that I have been using, we are trained in western culture to *emote* through the determinations of hyper-individuality, yet at the same time with a "universalizing"

[64] The dominant self-help model treats emotions as "specific" and "personal", as though they are personally and biologically contained. Despite the theoretical controversy that exists around this understanding (see Ahmed, 2004b), the view that emotion refers to a sociological, autobiographical expression of feeling that is universal and biologically contained is how the dominant therapeutic models treat emotions; they are signalled by internal physiological changes (which in turn can stimulate changes as well), manifested by nonverbal reactions, and defined by, in most cases, cognitive interpretations (Ekman, 1957,1972,1979,1992; Plutchik, 1980; Tomkins, 1962, 1963).

[65] It is worth noting quickly that the concept of subsumption comes from Marx, who distinguishes between "real" and "formal subsumption" of labour by capital. Formal subsumption describes the process by which emergent capitalist social relations "take over" the process of production under the existing relations of production. Craft production, for instance, is taken over and geared towards the production of surplus value. But as capitalism solidifies its hold on society, it begins to shape production, and ultimately society itself, in its image to suit its requirements. This is evident in the emergence of the factory system, which was far more efficient for capital's purposes of controlling production and labour power, and ultimately extracting surplus value (Marx, 1990).

tendency wherein our emotional experiences are narrow and limited and gauged against the established "norm" (Massumi, 2015).

Massumi argues that the way that that power flows between people is related to how affect functions. Therefore, I think that those of us committed to an ethic of autonomy need to acknowledge that when those on the left are unable to overcome basic and everyday interpersonal differences, the effects are clearly powerfully divisive and serve only to strengthen capitalist hegemony. Ironically, the affective labour of the sad militant, for all their strident opposition to capitalism, often only serves to reinforce divisions within the left.

To make sense of this idea, recall one of the many ways that affect can be conceptualized is "inclining naturally or habitually towards" (Collins English Dictionary, Sixth Edition, 2003). Thus the flow of affect within activist communities could be said to tend towards existing power dynamics in the dominant culture. In our case, the western context, the dominant culture is structured around capitalism, i.e., exploitation, division, fear, and insecurity, *plus* a conceptualization of the "human" as *homo oeconomicus*—inclined neurologically (due to the way these discourses in-form us affectively) towards systems of rewards and punishment and a sense that capitalism is the *natural* way of organizing life (Wynter, 2015).

In Chapter 2 I outlined two key qualities/terms that Massumi gives to affect: relation and tendency (2015). When discussing the idea of capacity to be affected and to affect, he argues that the

> "patterns of movement through these affective transitions are weighted for a particular body or particular situations, as more or less accessible, more or less

> ready to go. There's an activation not only of the body, but of the body's tendencies, as they move into and through situations. In taking account of this, you get a relationship complex.."(Massumi, 2015: 50)

Thus, the tendency for people in resistance communities to reinforce power arrangements found in the dominant order is completely and totally understandable from an affective point of view. We are being "in-formed" by these tendencies of affect which are relying on "violence and the hardening of divisions along identity lines" (Massumi, 2015: 36). Even if I am actively resisting exploitation in my activism, the influences of the discourses that support capitalism and essentialism will tend to affectively dispose me towards these relations of domination, which find expression through strong divisions along lines of identity (Massumi, 2015). My most intimate sense of "being" will incline towards these determinations because the dominant discourses are guiding the direction of the flow. And these determinations are those that are reflected in the dominant order (me vs. you, us vs. them, White vs. POC, queer vs. straight, reward vs. punishment, pure vs. non-pure activist). It is worth reiterating that I am not trying to argue that the "mere fact" of identification brings on specifically capitalist inclinations, but rather that it is specific modes of identity production, those of psychologizing and biocentric discourses (hyper-individuality, competition, economically driven) that affect towards rigid identity politics that continue to intensify determinations of capital.[66]

[66] Slyvia Wynter's work should be consulted by western autonomists as it points to both how we constantly (re)produce identity categories that strengthen "difference," at the same time as (re)produce "sameness" through the dominant ontology of a centered self, both of which secure liberal "monohumanism" (Wynter, 2015). Likewise, we experience life and invest in it from a biocentric ontology, aiding the determination of a "survival of the fittest" *mythoi* (Wynter, 2015). The dominant ontology of emotions is wrapped into these histories (and biocentrism) and serves to aid in intensifying these determinations (Wynter, 2015). The ongoing colonial project is a part of the process of capitalism, narrowing what is experientially possible from an emotional standpoint, and encouraging relationships that limit the possibility of different

Even my first and second generation immigrant POC (people of colour) participants (I am second generation) who may have been influenced primarily, or in part, by non-western cultures, were conditioned by, and adopted or inclined towards, these affective tendencies, exemplified in the commonalities of the expression of personal narrative, description of emotions, and analysis of conflict. In the same way that we could say "falling water affects roundness", another way affect is defined from *Collins English Dictionary*, (Sixth Edition, 2003) we could say that "activist subjectivity affects individualism and identity" (in the West).

Despite our best efforts, activist subjectivity tends to affect dispositions encouraged by the forces of the current socio-political context as we "fall through it." In other words, affect in this socio-political context inclines towards the existing flows of power (patriarchal, colonial, etc.), making outcomes such as "feeling rules" or "hidden hierarchies" more likely, as well as conflict that is driven by identity politics. Affect is moving through existing channels/hegemonic flows of power. Both of these affects (feeling rules and hidden hierarchies) could be defined as the affective flows in communities that bind us to specific groupings of people and to specific spaces, forcing us to either impose a will to agree, or impose a way to affect that is in line with the overall attitude of the group, again reflecting the arrangements found in the dominant order (Holmes, 2004: 220).

The trope of the sad militant is like a nodal point in the flow of affect. Many of my volunteers talked about how you had to "get in line" if someone was going to be

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conditions of being (Illouz, 2007). Emotional life is a site where efforts to create "subjects" to be productive of colonial efforts have succeeded, limiting possibilities of being and feeling in service of capital (Wynter, 2015).

called out, and often once a decision was made to call someone out or oust someone from a community or take other punitive measures, if others didn't "shut up about it" or "get on board," they would be viewed as sympathizers and punished (i.e., policed and persecuted by the rulers of the space). Often, my interviewees who participated in the calling-out process (as well as processes of ousting people) felt that a "reverse consensus" was in play (Wilkinson, 2009). Decisions were often made privately between certain people to call someone out or oust them from a group, and once this decision was made behind closed doors, pressure would be applied to ensure "consensus" throughout the group. Again, the inclination of both the punishing and the perpetrating was organized around certain people with overdeterminations of sadness and militancy.

Consequently, the thread that connects most of the issues that tend to result in diminishment of capacities to act found in autonomy-oriented social movements is identity politics. The ceaseless and harmful fractioning and infighting that is commonplace in the radical left communities I researched and reviewed is fuelled by ontological commitments to essentialist notions of emotions and self that *necessitate* strong identity categories to be propagated, and thus tensions and conflicts will always be based from these positions unless they are examined and destabilized. Again, this is not to say that we should accept racism or sexism, but rather refuse inclinations towards particular identities (many of which come from a European colonial legacy). This is to recognize, first, that there are inclinations to racism and sexism which are part of the affect of these modes of identity production; to creatively refuse these inclinations (or to re-form them) would be to recognize the psychologizing and biocentric discourses

(hyper-individuality, competition, economically driven) and how they affect towards rigid identity politics that continue to intensify determinations of capital.

The hegemony of identity politics seems especially odd to me because most radicals I know are committed, in theory, to the notion of decentered subjectivity. For example, fighting against the ongoing violence and alienation directed towards people with different gender identities is central to queer and trans politics. There is an ongoing effort in queer and trans discourses to challenge the ideas that gender identities are natural or merely biologically determined (Aultman, 2014). Indeed, most of the cisgender and straight radical activists I interviewed were allies in this struggle, and most are convinced of the *non-essential* nature of other identity categories like race, ethnicity, sex, class, and ability. However, my interview results, as well as the case studies from Chapter 4 suggest that these anti-essentialist commitments do not extend into the way that conflict is handled or how emotions are understood, pointing to key ways autonomy-oriented activists remain distinctly entrenched within hegemonic discourses despite their efforts to become autonomous. Likewise, the literature on emotions in autonomy-oriented struggle presented a picture of the radical left in the West where infighting, strife, and conflict abound in radical political communities, and conflicts often emerge around identity-based and emotionally driven determinations.

Given my presentation of the disheartening facets of radical organizing that are in-formed/built on the dominant discourse of emotions in the West, where can hope be found? How can we acknowledge and continue to fight systemic oppression that affects some bodies more intensely than others without continuously strengthening individual identity categories that, due to these systemic inequalities, are constantly being

(re)intensified? Or, how does one begin to resist a disciplinary system based on the management and manipulation of emotions, one that dominates and regulates subjects under capitalism and intensifies the identity categories already shaped by colonial projects (Ahmed, 2004a)? How might we begin to imagine how a situation might look/feel if it didn't involve the blame-based and emotionally charged conflicts that frequently form around identity categories in autonomy-oriented organizing? To look for hope is to try to answer these questions[67] and to seriously think about what a non-psychologized approach to emotions could look like in western autonomy-oriented radical resistance communities. In order to imagine this, I will take up Slyvia Wynter's statement that "the rule is love" (Wynter, 2015: x), and will discuss some ethical commitments that might materialize from this "rule".

Hope and Affect

Those of us who are working on decolonizing our everyday lives (in the West) and committed to autonomy-oriented ethics might start by acknowledging that, in the area of dealing with emotions in everyday life, especially of strife and conflict, most existing practices do not adequately embrace an autonomous ethic (one that reaches to create open

[67] Some further questions that emerged when thinking through these themes: How can we make visible the way that emotions are embedded into the logic of capitalism? How can we resist and reshape and recreate our most intimate responses and interactions of life so as not to reproduce dominant regimes of capitalist emotions? What do we often feel "good" or "bad" about in activist communities? In what way are these emotions tied to notions of (or offenses against) the "good life"? How do we begin a dialogue outside of what Wynter calls *homo oeconomicus*? What does capitalism feel like? What would be required to sense how affects of the dominant order are in-forming autonomy-oriented communities of resistance? What can be done to address complex and painful experiences in organizing beyond the models that currently exist (check ins, let's talk, debriefs)? We can look to our emotional models and ask a number of important questions: What are their ontological components? Do these components reflect autonomous principles or an anti-capitalist ontology or otherwise? Why or why not? How? Many of these questions could be asked to begin to struggle to understand and grapple with the theory and practice of autonomy and the spaces where these alternatives are created and struggled for.

and accessible and radically participatory and inclusive spaces with different modes of relating than those that exist in the dominant order). The following assessment acknowledges that people's emotional lives matter and are crucial for both nourishing the ongoing creation of autonomous spaces and practices as well as "reaching out to find connection" beyond the various expressions of "brokenness" that exists from legacies (ongoing) of capitalism and colonialisms (Moten & Harney, 2013: 5)

Ethic of love

Slyvia Wynter suggests that the project of re-imagining a world with different ontological standpoints than those that shore up capitalism would have an ethic where "the rule is love" (Wynter, 2015: x). The sheer simplicity of this statement is precisely what makes it difficult to imagine in practice. But I think what Wynter is suggesting is akin to Rosa Luxemberg's insistence that it is only from a radical collective subjectivity that real opposition to the exploitative dominant order emerges (Blunden, 2014). I might be stretching both of their meanings, but I think that what is being asked is to reimagine what it is to be human, that is, we are asked to refuse to accept the supposed boundaries between the individual self and collective existence which accompanies the West's dominant ontology of emotions (Wynter, 2015). This is not to conceptualise agency as "sameness" in terms of social subjects that are understood as either mutually independent or entirely contained within, for instance, institutions, organizations, or social movements. Rather, it is an acknowledgment that subject positions are interplaying within a multiplicity of narratives, none of which are essential or "fixed"; it is a real commitment to an ontology of a decentered subject in which subjectivities are

discursively constituted, not merely revealed as "false consciousness" yielding to the truth of who oppressed subjects "really are" (Laclau & Mouffe, 2001; Foucault, 1990). Since our subjectivities are discursively constituted, might that knowledge generate more compassion for the location of others? In theory, on the left, this knowledge would help to minimize practices that are punitive and emotionally charged. However, the knowledge that our subjectivities are discursively constituted does not mean that a) our practices reflect this or b) essentialists couldn't have compassion for the location of others. It does point to the ongoing tension between people who are engaged in the production/practice of critical discourses versus those people who are engaged in the production/practice of dominant discourses (and similar to autonomy-oriented, there is no complete break/freedom from the dominant discourse).

Knowing that the "centered" self is an illusion—a shadow puppet cast by the mind in the light of a multitude of glowing discourses—should we not have compassion for the inevitable impurities of our comrades, fellow humans in the "norm", and ourselves, whether our opponents do or not? And this is a light example of the debates between the more and the less "left". What about between those on the radical left, who have access to critical discourses, shouldn't there be even more compassion from/amongst us? The hope would be for less harm and more humility in responding to those who accuse us of harm, or those we feel have harmed us, so that our immediate reactions aren't defence and offence. Moreover, recognizing that emotional standpoints are often symptoms of oppressive discourses, and knowing that our emotions are in-formed by the discourses we are resisting, could help to avoid emotions becoming dominant in conflicts, and could allow emotions to be recognized as symptoms of how

these discourses are affecting all of those involved- how they are "at play" in an event/situation/conflict. According to Moten, this can help to produce a coalition politics that recognizes that this shit is bad for *all of us*, and "the coalition emerges out of your recognition that it's fucked up for you, in the same way that we've already recognized that it's fucked up for us. I don't need your help. I just need you to recognize that this shit is killing you, too, however much more softly, you stupid motherfucker, you know?" (Moten & Harney, 2013: 10)

Another way of describing the affective dimension of the ontological shift required is put forth when Sara Ahmed says, "emotions are not simply something I or we have. Rather, it is through emotions, or how we respond to objects and others, that surfaces or boundaries are made: the I and the we are shaped by, and even take the shape of, contact with others" (2004b:10). Seen this way, emotions are like affect—they are what form and shape differences, and the boundaries that appear to exist between self and other are modes of identity formation around which political subjectivities form; if we can recognize this then we can separate "acts" from "bodies."

In other words, "the rule is love" is real anti-essentialism**.** To have a commitment to anti-essentialism is to have a commitment to understanding the way that essentialism plays out in conflict[68]. It is looking at how we treat and view people and how emotions are understood and articulated and managed. The hegemonic discourses at work in situations like "calling out" distil complex human beings into "simply the representations

[68] As I write this the U.S. primaries featuring Donald Trump is playing out all over the news, the Orlando shootings just happened, and the Black Lives Matter movement just delayed the pride parade in Toronto. People's responses to *how they feel* about all of these different events are seen in raging debates that form around politics of identity. The most alarming for me are the heated debates on 'the left' as to the value of racialized identities over others and how they should be represented/valued. The questions I am investigating in this project are extremely relevant to present day political debates.

of the systems from which they benefit" (Ahmad, 2015: para 5). An autonomy-oriented approach would require taking a view of subjectivity as complex by "refusing to unleash all of our very real trauma onto the psyches of those we imagine to only represent the systems that oppress us" (Ahmad, 2015: para 5). In the words of Ahmad, "it means we're treating each other as if our individual social locations *stand in* for the total systems those parts of our identities represent. Individuals become synonymous with systems of oppression, and this can turn systemic analysis into moral judgement. Too often, when it comes to being called out, narrow definitions of a person's identity count for everything" (Ahmad, 2015: para 4). A non-essentialist approach to conflict would not be personal; it would be about looking for patterns and seeking to be free from these determinations in creative ways.

Another way of understanding affect that I addressed in chapter 2 was that affect expresses as "performance" and "pretence" (Collins English Dictionary, sixth edition, 2003). This conceptualization points to how affect exhibits itself in particular trends, formations, and towards patterns and orderings that are often overdetermined, reflecting tendencies of the dominant order in autonomy-oriented organizing. "The rule is love" would look to how affect can inform our understanding and (re)imagining of autonomy-oriented "practice" in order to stay attentive to these manifestations. An autonomy-oriented community or group could focus on their affective practices and question what part "the emotional" plays during both the interpretation of events, as well as how conflicts emerge and are resolved. Looking at affective practice is asking: what do people tend to do in situations that have depleting and sad outcomes? The point of using the category of affect for social analysis is that it allows us to look for "shifting, flexible and

often over-determined figurations rather than simple lines of causation, character types and neat emotion categories" (Wetherell, 2012: 10). It allows us to view our transpersonal engagements as temporary autonomous zones (TAZs) where we can imagine the power of resistance as the potential of our capacities to expand our affective register within and around interactions—potential that is emerging processually, constantly (Bey, 1991). Seen this way, hope is *always* there for a remaking of relations; in every relationship complex there is no predetermination, simply inclinations that can be re-formed.

Future research in the area of emotions/affect and autonomy could examine the logic of finding spaces of "escape" from typical ways to interpret and experience difference. Moten and Harney (2013), for example, present the notion of Fugivity, akin to "escaping"—or even "exodus" Hardt (1996), which all refer to the refusal to settle into spaces/discourses/relations of colonialism while believing that there are "spaces and modalities that exist separate from the logical, logistical, the housed and the positioned" (Moten & Harney, 2013: 11) which they call "undercommon appositionalities" (2013: 11). For Moten and Harney, Fugivity is a mode of refusal to engage with and be defined by the discourses of capitalism and colonialism and their supporting structures. This mode of resistance is one that does *not* look for repair because the debts left from these systems can never be paid. Instead of any kind of recognition or acknowledgment Fugivity is a tearing down, taking apart, and dismantling all the modes of being that "right now, limits our ability to find each other, to see beyond it and to access the places that we know lie outside its walls" (Moten & Harney, 2013: 6). Likewise, Wynter's and Massumi's theories also give us ideas on how to theorize spaces outside of capital's determinations, while reimaging the possibilities of relations beyond identity politics, of

what it is to be "human," and how these discourses are shaped by capitalism and colonialism, and where we might find/create spaces beyond them. These "spaces" are constantly present, they are where we can look for what Massumi calls the "margins of manoeuvrability" that exists alongside the limited flows of affect that incline predictably towards capitalism's imperatives (affects relations and tendencies), yet always carry a potential to be re-formed through every encounter and relationship complex[69]. The co-creation of these spaces is up to those participating in them, but the "the rule is love" is inherently connective, compassionate, and forgiving, not punitive, blame-based, or puritanical. It declares that we need practices that (re)construct notions of subjectivity, belonging, and inclusivity, while transcending differences within and outside of groups ("calling-in" versus "calling-out" is one simple example, or doing away with the "calling" altogether). These affective practices would articulate a commitment to fighting systemic oppression by engaging with creative alternatives that shift our dependence from the dominant western ontology of emotions as the only way to understand subjectivity/identity. According to Moten and Harney, this requires an acknowledgment that, "the coalition unites us in the recognition that we must change things or die. All of us. We must all change the things that are fucked up and change cannot come in the form that we think of as "revolutionary"- not as a masculinist surge or an armed confrontation. Revolution will come in a form we cannot yet imagine (Moten & Harney, 2013: 11). For Moten and Harney one component of this change is entering into what they refer to as

[69] Re-forming these tendencies is another way of saying, in the language of Spinoza, that we increase our capacities to act in encounters, which according to Massumi expands our affective register helps to shift relationship complexes towards different tendencies (Massumi, 2015).

"study"- the practice of modes of thinking that are "*with* and *for*", a powerfully different process than "antagonized" and "antagonizing" (Moten & Harney, 2013: 11).

There is nothing inevitable about capitalism. I think I have made the case that there are sufficient grounds upon which to critique western emotional "common sense" and to do so would be a practice of what Wynter calls a reimagining of what a human being *is*, and a challenge to capitalism's seeming inevitability. Aiding in this quest in the West would require a shift from the command that emotions have on our discursive sense of "self" in the assemblage of emotions, affect, and feeling (EAF assemblage). Although it is hard to admit that we are being oppressed by our intimate "selves", an autonomy-oriented praxis would recognize the realm of the emotional in the West as essentialist, as a site of potential resistance, and be inclined to move towards an "elsewhere", relationally shifting towards a politics of affects. Autonomy-oriented ethics are about the practices of resisting the demands of the market, the state, and hierarchical social relations, while struggling to create and define new modes of being, antagonistic to the imperatives of capitalism, and the form of life it imposes—these are exciting endeavours! For Moten and Harney, this is the "*with* and *for*", constantly emerging as we refuse established settlements and connect with others who are *wanting* to find an elsewhere as well (i.e. the undercommons):

> "We cannot say what new structures will replace the ones we live with yet, because once we have torn shit down, we will inevitably see more and see differently and feel a new sense of wanting and being and becoming. What we want after "the break" will be different from what we think we want before the

break and both are necessarily different from the desire that issues from being in the break" (Moten et al, 2013:9)

The uncertainty of not being able to say what will come from tearing down structures is the power of affect- there is an incredible potential that exists, and can be unleashed, if we practice Fugivity, refusing to stabilize the dominant order with our intimate lives. I return one last time to the words of Ahmed: "our emotions are bound up with the securing of social hierarchy" (Ahmed, 2004b: 4). Thus, critically examining the role our emotions play in securing the social hierarchy, as an autonomy-oriented practice, is to destabilize and refuse to accept this hierarchy as inevitable; it is to say that we can define, for ourselves, what it is to be a human being (Massumi, 2015; Moten & Harney, 2015; Wynter, 2015).

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

Interview Schedule

Interview Guide for Participants (depending on participant may be paperless)

General Introductory Questions:

1. What types of 'activist' work have you done? Have you been involved in any groups? If so, which ones?
2. Can you describe what autonomy and autonomous politics means for you?

Feelings in organizing:

1. What role do emotions play in activism?
2. How have emotions figured into your experience of organizing communities? Are there 'positive' and 'negative' emotions in activism, in your view/experience?
3. Have you experienced recurring issues regarding feelings and emotions in activism? If so, what outcomes did you tend to see?
4. What emotions have motivated you to engage in autonomous activism? Have there been specific emotional experiences that have led to groups/projects/movements falling apart or just becoming less effective?
5. What models of 'dealing' with emotions have you been a part of in activist communities?
6. How do you deal with conflict, or issues that arise on an interpersonal level?
7. Have you found these models helpful in working out conflict or unpleasant feelings? What 'works' or doesn't?

8. How would you suggest creative, radical, and anti-oppressive ways of dealing with emotions that emerge through organizing and resisting that might help to resolve conflicts?
9. What motivates or repels you from activism?
10. Anger, Hope, Love, and Sadness are all written about extensively in work on resistance. Do any of these emotions resonate with your experiences as an activist more than others (or something not listed?)? How would you describe both the feeling and how it has figured into your experiences in autonomous-oriented practices/organizing?
11. Given the losses that we have all faced fighting for social justice on 'the left' how do you sustain yourself? (Where has your healing work been done? What support did you have? What have you found effective?)
12. Could you describe the overall emotional health of the left community (if any) where you live? (Ask about both the "light" and "dark" sides of radical organizing- what do they *feel* like?)
13. What does capitalism feel like?